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The Christmas Number of The Bookman.

"I AM A BOOKMAN."—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

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NOTICES.

All communications intended for the Editor must be addressed to the Editor of THE BOOKMAN, ST. PAUL'S HOUSE, WARWICK SQUARE, LONDON, E.C.4.

A preliminary letter of inquiry should be sent to the Editor before any manuscript is submitted for his consideration.

News Notes.

The January BOOKMAN will contain special articles on W. B. Yeats, by Laurence Binyon; "Henry and Thomas Vaughan," by A. E. Waite; "A. E.'s Prose," by John Freeman; "The Poetry of Edward Arlington Robinson," by Thomas Moult; "J. C. Squire's Essays," by R. Ellis Roberts; "Mr. Lloyd George," by Frederic Whyte; "Six Famous English Poets," "Some Contemporary Artists," a Bookman Gallery article on Kathlyn Rhodes, by W. H. Chesson, etc.

Between ourselves you may take it that authors, on the whole a good-natured race, generally make a few mistakes in their books on purpose to add to the pleasure of some of their readers. It gives one an unholy joy to drop on such errors and point them out to others, or write and call the author's attention to them, and perhaps add a word of reproof. The mistake Dickens made when describing that cricket match in "Pickwick" has been a source of pleasure to every expert cricketer who has read it ever since. Of course there are plenty of readers who miss such lapses or treat them as mere spots on the sun, too trivial to worry about, and write to an author on more essential affairs—fiercely denouncing him for his opinions or expressing admiration for his work and gratitude for the happiness he has given them. It is always a good sign when an author receives these or any sort of spontaneous communications from his public, for unless a book is alive and possesses some special quality of interest it cannot delight or exasperate the gentle reader sufficiently to prompt him to sit down and let his feelings loose in a letter.

A little while ago my friend Arthur Bartlett Maurice published in the *New York Herald* a selection of letters that had been received by American authors from members of the public who did or did not admire them, and it seemed a good thing to supplement his labours by an inquiry into the similar experiences of English authors. Several assure me they have had such letters in large quantities but have destroyed them; three are away from home and can't get at them; others are a little diffident on the matter, like

SIR OLIVER LODGE,

who says: "I do, like every one else, receive letters from cranks, which are occasionally amusing. I don't always keep them, and those that I have kept I am rather chary of publishing even in an anonymous manner. Some are simply abusive, but those are of no interest; and those which are of some kind of interest I hardly like to use in this way. Moreover the wrongness of those who write about Gravitation and Einstein and the like might not be fully apparent to your readers. So I think on the whole I had better be excused."

Photo by Elliott & Fry. **Sir Oliver Lodge.**

MRS. W. K. CLIFFORD,

too, thinks the less said about these things the better. "All writers, I believe, receive letters from their readers," she writes. "I have had many from mine. But I should not like to quote them; for if they were flattering I should feel as if I were boastful; if the reverse—why, I do not want any worse of me suggested to your readers than they may have discovered for themselves. And so I send you no letters and no extracts; but I may tell you, without prejudice, that since 'Aunt Anne' was published countless people have written to say they recognised their own particular Aunt, and how did I come

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mrs. W. K. Clifford.**

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to know her? I should like to add, for the benefit of some who have written to me out of their hearts —letters meant only for my eyes to see—that I have gratefully and reverently burnt them lest some day they should fall into stranger hands and be misunderstood."

MR. I. ZANGWILL

must have had some nice communications at times, but he says: "I regret that my absence in Italy prevents my selecting specimens of the incredible letters I receive from all quarters of the globe, upon which I appear to enjoy less the reputation of an author than of an almoner. If I said 'Yes' to everything I am asked to do or donate I should soon be in my village workhouse or in the lunatic asylum, from which my more Messianic correspondents must hail. To read and write up the plays of unknown and illiterate people and get them produced is the least of the tasks expected of me, though some are good enough to offer half the profits. Perhaps the most amusing letter I ever received was from an alchemist in California, who wanted me to send him his travelling expenses to England so that he might personally demonstrate to me his power of changing the baser metals into gold. I advised him to raise his fare by converting a little copper before he sailed."

Photo by Ionides. **Mr. I. Zangwill.**

MR. FRANK SWINNERTON

does not seem to have come off any too well. "Nobody writes me funny letters about my books," he declares, "though my friends—who, I'm afraid, don't take me very seriously as a novelist—find all the letters I get extremely funny. Their attitude is: 'Fancy anybody writing like that to Frank! As if he were a *real* writer, instead of just our friend!' I did once receive a strange letter from a young woman who opened with the words, 'How did you know about me?' But I expect this was a hoax. And another from a man who wrote gravely that he had liked a book of mine so much that he had bought a copy. And another from a man who said he wanted to read a book by me because I seemed to have a cheerful face. Otherwise my letters are either from respectable young women who want to know what happens to certain characters, or from those who want autographs, money or advice. I'd forgotten—I've had a number of letters pointing out mistakes I've made over the Scottish Law of Primogeniture (or whatever it is) and such-like things. I don't keep such letters." Which looks as if he did not take his mistakes so seriously as he ought to.

Photo by Dorothy Hickling. **Mr. Frank Swinnerton.**

MR. ERNEST RAYMOND

has only written two books so far, and will probably be more fierce on this subject when he has written a few more. "My most amusing and quite my favourite correspondent," he writes, "is a lady who appears from her letters and handwriting to be a juvenile flapper. I enclose a series of three of her letters. Here is the first:

DEAR MR. RAYMOND,—I am sure you will feel very cross when you get this letter, and say, "From another silly schoolgirl. Bother her!" or something like it. I only write to you because I read one of your books—"Tell England"—and I felt I had to tell you that you are a simply splendid writer—a poor excuse, isn't it, as I suppose lots of people have told you that before. I like you second to Rudyard Kipling because bits of that book are what he might have written and are like him. It's very queer I should like "Tell England" because it made me quite miserably depressed for over a week, and so bad tempered! My father was at Gallipoli and said the book was very true to life. I send the usual stamped addressed envelope, you see, not because I really think you will answer this, but because it seems to be the proper thing to do.

This subtle conclusion made Mr. Raymond feel that "an immediate answer was quite the only proper thing for *me* to do," and he received this response:

DEAR MR. RAYMOND,—Thank you so much for your letter, it was really awfully good of you to reply. I have an elder sister who is rather proud of the fact that she knows four authoresses, and so you see I shall wait until you are a very Great Man Indeed, and then completely squash her by showing her your letter. I hope you are writing another book, if so I'll buy it when it comes out.

Shortly after the publication of "Rossenal" Mr. Raymond received a third letter from this charming correspondent:

DEAR MR. RAYMOND,—I do hope you will not mind my writing to you again, but I wanted to tell you that I think your new success, "Rossenal," is perfectly splendid, and I liked best of all the "Westward in the Sunset" poem. I do not like "Rossenal" as well as "Tell England," but then I do not think I could like any book as much as your first one. I am afraid you will think it very great cheek

From "CHILDREN'S STORIES FROM RUMANIAN LEGENDS,"
by M. GASTER, Ph.D.
Illustrated with twelve Coloured Plates, etc., by C. E. BROCK, R.I.
(Published by Raphael Tuck & Sons, Ltd.).

"IT CAME DOWN AS A SHOWER OF STARS."
From "The Story of the Firefly."

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Mr. Ernest Raymond.

of me to say so, but I rather wish that your next book will be like "Tell England" and "The Hill"—a "Romance of Friendship," and not a love story. I don't like love stories or their heroines much, as a rule, but I think Eileen was the nicest heroine you could have had. I hope, too, that you will have your own poetry in your next book.

These are the kind of letters other authors will envy, but

MR. COMPTON MACKENZIE

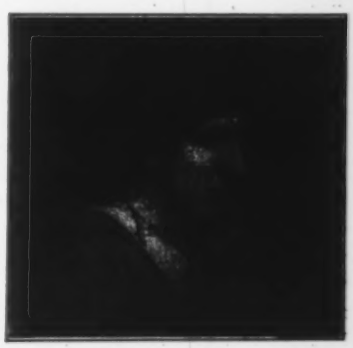
takes us back to sterner stuff. "I am afraid nearly all the letters I have received from readers," he says, "are at Capri, so I cannot send you any. I remember getting a letter just before the war from an Englishman in Munich, which began, 'Dear Sir, I have just finished reading your first volume of "Sinister Street" and think I may say it was the shortest six hours I ever spent.' Seeing that there were several more pages to come, I settled myself down complacently to take my fill of admiration, and read on. 'When I'd finished,' continued my correspondent, 'I asked myself what good has this six hours done me? What good has the dreary reporter's bosh that you, Arnold Bennett and H. G. Wells write done me? I get more from six sentences of a writer like Jack London than in the whole of the six hours I have wasted on you.' The rest of the letter consisted of a long extract from 'John Barleycorn.' 'That is what I call writing,' my correspondent concluded. Another letter came from New Zealand with a request that as brother-in-law of H. G. Pelissier I would obtain 'that respected gentleman's signature.' My correspondent added, 'We all enjoy your books in our family, but my Grandma who is ninety-six just worships you; she bought twelve copies of "Carnival" to give away to friends this Christmas.' From Hungary I once had a letter addressed to 'Compton Mackenzie, Writer of English, London,' and inside, 'Please with compliments to send your honourable autogram.'"

Photo by E. O. Hoppé.

Mr. Compton Mackenzie.

MISS KATHLYN RHODES

has found it difficult to make a selection from the enormous pile of letters she has received, "as many are of too personal a nature to be interesting to outsiders." But one that has given her most pleasure was from a group of boys in a Home who wrote saying, "We wish to express our appreciation of 'Dodo's Schooldays.' Sister says you sent the book for the girls, but we boys all like it very much. We think Dodo was such a sport we want to read some more about her, so please write another book about her as soon as you can. As some of us are leaving the Home soon, do not trouble to have it printed, we can read it in writing just as well if you will please send it along quick." Another it was pleasant to receive ran: "I do wish I could see you—why don't you have a little photograph of yourself in the cover of your books? I wonder if you are like I think you are. Have you got lovely copper-coloured hair and eyes to match, and a beautiful pink and white complexion, or am I wrong?" Miss Rhodes says she was wrong, but another got nearer the mark when she wrote: "I sometimes try to picture what you are like—slender and dark, I think." The first correspondent afterwards wrote: "*May* I knit you a jumper? And if so, what is your favourite colour?" And the jumper came. But Miss Rhodes has had her trials. A sergeant stationed in Egypt wrote to complain: "You have got the position of the Post Office in Port Said wrong." He supplied the correction and apologised for doing so, but added, "I read all your books and am sorry to see you making a mistake." And there was an anonymous person who wrote: "After reading your 'Desert Dreamers' I have consigned it to the flames, as I should not like anyone I cared for to read such a book. Thought perhaps this might interest you, as I do not consider the book fit for the market or public reading." Miss Rhodes sends this one "just to show that all my correspondents are not alike in their views. I have several other anonymous letters, as well as some peculiarly offensive sketches which I have never been able to understand; but the letters are generally of too abusive and personal a nature to use." These, however, are



Miss Kathlyn Rhodes.

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amply atoned for by letters of warmest praise, including a brief note of high appreciation from Sir A. Conan Doyle.

It would have been strange if

MR. WILLIAM LE QUEUX

had not been the recipient of some unusual letters, and here is the confession he has been good enough to make to me:

"Like most other authors I have received much curious correspondence in the years I have been writing. First and foremost my readers appear to make me their confidant on the question of enemy espionage, probably because I have written much upon the subject. Before the war I had many letters reporting suspected spies, but when the war came the public suffered from a bad attack of spy-mania. Every one thought they knew a spy, and on the third day after the publication of my book, 'German Spies in England,' I received no fewer than three hundred and ten letters, all of which eventually had the attention of the department dealing with such matters. I must here say that though the majority of the allegations of my correspondents were groundless, in three cases I received information of the highest importance to the authorities.

"Being a cosmopolitan I constantly receive from my readers requests for advice regarding a cheap holiday abroad, the best hotels at which to stay and their cost at the present rate of exchange. Then, as a wireless engineer and experimenter, I have to-day all sorts of radio problems put before me, many of which could not be solved even by the research department of the Marconi Company. One of my correspondents recently dropped into poetry, and sent me the following lines:

It troubles each sex,
So I put it to you;
Is it William Le Quex,
Or William Le Queux?

We give you the cue,
So no longer perplex,
It is William Le Queux,
Not William Le Quex.

"Another letter, dated from Brixton only a few weeks ago, reads:

DEAR SIR,—We, the undersigned, are three public school men, ex-officers, and we are very anxious for your advice. We know by your books that you have had many adventures during your secret service work abroad. This letter is not written after a visit to "Bull-Dog Drummond," but after calm and mature thought. We, like Drummond, have no fear, and we have an idea that if we entered into partnership we might be of considerable use to persons who might desire confidential missions undertaken—of course if they were matters of an honest nature. We think that in the City of London, in both business and social circles, there are many people who want such missions undertaken, but do not know people of integrity and fearlessness ready to carry them out. Between us we hold the qualifications of air-pilot, sailor, motor-engineer, prospector, Master of Arts, waiter, lawyer, clerk, cowboy, and when occasion arises—"gentleman." We venture to write to you for your opinion on our suggestion, and also wonder whether you might not be disposed to join us.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. William Le Queux.**

"Further, I have a poor unfortunate lunatic correspondent who began years ago by letters of fulsome praise. Of every book or story I wrote he sent me long and elaborate criticisms. He said he read no books but mine and the Bible. I can quite believe it, for the poor fellow took to collecting my books, sometimes half a dozen or so of each edition, until when at last he was taken to the asylum, where he still is, it was found that he possessed no fewer than four hundred and eighty volumes of which I was the author! As the majority of this mass of correspondence means polite replies, it adds very considerably to the task of an already overworked writer of fiction."

MR. W. B. MAXWELL

has found his correspondents, as Shakespeare found life, of a mingled yarn, good and evil, and writes:

"I must confess that I have always attached great value to letters received from my readers, when those readers were complete strangers, because it seemed to me then that I was getting the absolutely frank opinion which a writer looks for in vain from kind friends or relations. I have sought too to be guided more or less by the criticism that thus flows in upon one from unknown sources; but unfortunately the opinions offered are extremely contradictory. I should perhaps explain that in my case, and I suppose in all other cases, strangers write not only extremely flattering letters, but letters of a condemnatory and even abusive character. Such letters are difficult to interpret; but one may nevertheless derive from them a dim estimate of the actual effect of one's work and make some sort of guess as to the class of people it is reaching. A common type of letter is the one relating the events of a lifetime, and suggesting that they would make a capital book. These are often amusing and occasionally tragic. Sometimes a letter from a stranger is quite obviously an effort to pull one's leg. Unfortunately, although, as I say, I value these communications, the pressure of life has prevented me from keeping many of them.

But here are two instances of very contradictory criticism:

"(1) From a man:

. . . Claims my admiration; for how should one of my sex be so deeply versed in women's dress!

"(2) From a lady:

. . . From this I should judge you to be a bachelor, you break down rather pathetically on the detail of women's dress. You may think this a small matter and no doubt it is to men—but how can a woman retain her confidence in your omniscience when as for instance . . . ? (Cases cited.)"

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. W. B. Maxwell.**

Perhaps some of the quaintest and most startling of such letters have been delivered at the door of

MR. SAX ROHMER.

He has had the usual requests for autographs—one from an excited young lady who asks for two, one for a friend who is ill; but a large proportion of his letters from the public are of a more lurid, not to say lawless, order. One from another young lady, who had just been reading "The Return of Doctor Fu Manchu," shows how he impresses his readers with a belief that his stories are all true. "I intend," she says, "to be a secret service agent when I finish college, and am hoping that there will be a Fire-Tongue for me to run down. I want to be a member of an organisation like Fire-Tongue's (only I don't want to murder some one). If I can't belong to one I want to have a chance to *fight* one. . . . If I can't do either of these things I want to organise a secret society, and I want you to tell me what to do, how to do it and give me a purpose."

Experienced old criminals, from reading his tales of mystery and crime, seem to take it for granted that he is himself far gone in sin and a superior hand at their own dreadful business. One, giving his name and address, opens a startling epistle with the abrupt inquiry: "Would you be interest in writing a pice entiled 'You can Beat the Bank of England if you go at it right'?" He then proceeds to give minute details of how he and the book-keeper of his firm, having agreed to "go at it 50-50," embarked on a complicated practice of misappropriating the funds of their employers and falsifying the accounts successfully, and even succeeded in hoodwinking the detectives when the firm could not see where the money was going. He does not make it clear whether he wants Sax Rohmer to join him in a scheme for tapping the wealth of the Bank of England, but evidently considers that, being inured to crime, he would welcome some tips from another expert.

But an experienced gentleman writing from America goes much farther in his self-revelations. He begins by saying he was in communication with Mr. Elbert Hubbard, who "unfortunately went down on the ill-fated *Lusitania*, and same I believed, sir, spoiled my chances and broad-minded opportunities to reform, astound and revolutionise this unhappy world." He then, by way of recommending himself to Sax Rohmer's favourable consideration, proceeds: "I know, sir—have seen crime and criminals, White Slavery, Houses of Ill Fame in 'Frisco before The beastly and during the 'Quake. Sir, I know Chinese High Binder Wars from A to Z, am a member in high standing of The Bing Kong Tongs, as any man would be with our American Masons alongside of The Eagles, Elks and Oddfellows. I am high with the Bings towards the Suey Sings, Hip Sing Tongs, Hop Sing Tongs and On Leong Tongs. So you see how the Chinks, Mr. Rohmer, class themselves, and the other nations call them 'Highbinders.' A chink cops a man's wife, steals his business, double-crosses him, all he does, Sir, calls a meeting of his lodge; lays the cold, vivid facts before them, and a messenger is sent with asking reparabation. If nothing is done in reciprocation another meeting is called and a price is put on the man's head, and volunteers are asked for. Then the world talks. I am a Roman, speak four (4) languages, an expert typist and shorthand writer, and I learned many sad things about The Italians about The beastly Mafia Wars the papers talk about." He is a little vague concerning his particular offences, which were apparently connected with jewellery and furs, but he makes it clear that the judge "comuted my sentence from 25 to 8 years" and apologises in a postscript for any obscurities of style, saying: "Note Sir: I am sorry I am not behind my woodstack No. 5 so I could be more explanatory." Even the reference to the woodstack is a mystery to me, but he takes it for granted that the creator of Dr. Fu Manchu will sympathise with him, having an inside knowledge of little matters of that sort, and probably only writing at his best when he is behind a woodstack of his own.

Mr. Sax Rohmer.

M. E. FRANCIS (Mrs. Mary Blundell)

has had less sensational but not less interesting correspondents. "I have had many odd letters in

the course of my literary career," she writes; "some of the kind familiar probably to most authors, in which appreciation of the novelist's work is adroitly mingled with the setting forth of the writer's own condition of impecuniosity. I remember in particular the ingenuous effusion of one young gentleman who informed me with much high-flown hyperbole that he had been a bad boy and had broken the heart of his widowed mother. For her sake he besought me to accommodate him with a loan of fifty pounds, artlessly adding: 'I think it only right to tell you that I can give no security whatever and that the name by which I sign this letter is not my own'! A somewhat similar document came to me from India, where a young Hindu student, enthusiastic, it would seem, about my books, asked me to send him two or three, not that he might 'selfishly keep them to himself,' he said, but that he might have the pleasure of observing their effect upon his companions. In a fine glow of generosity I sent the youth a few books, and was somewhat damped when some months later he petitioned for a piece of black cloth of sufficient dimensions to make himself a pair of trousers!

Photo by Lafayette. **M. E. Francis (Mrs. Blundell).**

"But two letters stand out in my mind as unique. One from an unknown reader who signed himself 'A Ploughman,' and who told me in language carefully chosen but not stilted how he had been affected by certain pages of 'Fiander's Widow.' He too, he said, loved Nature for her own sake as Richard Marshall loved her. All that I had related of Richard's delight in his work and its surroundings could equally apply to himself. He thanked me for putting into words emotions and sensations of which he was conscious but which he was unable to express. 'When I am leading my horses to the field to-morrow morning,' he said, 'I shall be thinking of Richard and Rosalie.' He did not want to be thanked for his letter, for he gave no name and no address. It was a spontaneous thing and gave me great pleasure.

"The other letter came from a London slum and contained a piteous appeal. The writer's wife was lying dead in a certain workhouse infirmary. Unless he could remove the body in a specified time she would be buried by the parish. He had read some of my books and thought I had a kind heart; would I send enough to bury her? There was very little time to decide—none in which to make inquiries. The man might be a professional beggar or a rogue—on the other hand his story might be true, and if so——. I sent the money by express, and at the same time, as a kind of salve to my own conscience, wrote to the Union authorities to ascertain if the circumstances as related were correct. In due course reassurance came, and after some time a letter of thanks, dignified and poignant, the more so because the words were few. It contained a receipted undertaker's bill—the story was true."

Poets and essayists, apparently, do not get so many or such remarkable letters as the popular novelist is accustomed to receive. Now and then—not often; not so often as some authors would like—a correspondent will, as tangible evidence of appreciation, send a brace of ducks or a piece of jewellery; one novelist tells me that shortly after the publication of a tale of his which was written in the first person and told of a literary man and his family living in desperate poverty, and left them still struggling hard on the last page, an anonymous reader, convinced that it was written out of personal experience, posted to him, through his publisher, twenty-five pounds in bank-notes. This was, as it happened, a tribute to that author's imagination; but it was proof no less of the good-heartedness there is in the world and the strong feeling of sympathy a well-realised story can establish between its writer and its readers. He tells me he related this incident to a brother-novelist who, being actually impecunious, wrote in the first person a harrowing tale of another literary man in distress and, after it was published, waited for results in vain. You are not bound to believe it, but things do occur perversely, like that, at times.

THE BOOKMAN.

A study of G. K. Chesterton by Mrs. Patrick Braybrooke has just been published by the Chelsea Publishing Company. Mr. Arthur F. Thorne has written an introduction for the volume.

"The Best of the Year" is the title of a new Annual, the first number of which Messrs. Collins have just published. It contains what are, in the Editor's judgment, the best things of their kind that have appeared in magazines and newspapers during the year—orations by H.M. the King, Mr. Lloyd George, Lord Birkenhead and Sir James Barrie; short stories, poems and other contributions by Eden Phillpotts, J. D. Beresford, Sheila Kaye-Smith, G. K. Chesterton, Hilaire Belloc, Bernard Shaw, Muriel Stuart, Edward Shanks, Herbert Trench, Rebecca West, and other distinguished authors. In addition it has a series of specially contributed articles on the best things done during the year in art, architecture, books,

One of JEAN de BOSSCHÈRE'S Illustrations to the new Constable edition of "DON QUIXOTE," based on Shelton's Translation of 1620, and edited with an Essay by J. B. TREND.

TWO MONKS . . . MOUNTED ON DROMEDARIES.

drama, music, films and in the world of sport. There are ten beautiful reproductions of the year's art.

Messrs. Leighton, Son & Hodge have a special interest in the celebration this year of the centenary of a very important discovery in connection with modern book production. Until 1822 books in cloth bindings were unknown, but in that year Archibald Leighton, a bookbinder of Exmouth Street, Clerkenwell, introduced a revolution into the trade by discovering or inventing bookbinder's cloth. It was, for twenty years or so, a composite product of various firms of dyers, calendars, etc., the lettering being embossed by the binders, and not until 1841 did "Bookbinders' Cloth-Maker," as a trade by itself, first appear in the London Directory.

Messrs. Philpot & Co. are publishing a second impression of Mrs. Watts-Dunton's "Home Life of Swinburne," which is just now being discussed at considerable length in the American reviews.

THE BOOKMAN PRIZE COMPETITIONS, November–December, 1922.—Results of the Competitions announced last month will be given in the January BOOKMAN, and as we go to press before the 14th November the time for sending in remains open until the 14th December.

THE BOOKMAN GALLERY.

ROBERT KEABLE.

WE are doing an injustice to the human side of the extremely literary person if we suppose that he expresses the whole of himself when he contributes that imperial sniff of his to a conversation which has turned on the fellow-author who on some recent morning woke up to find himself a best seller, like Mr. Hutchinson, or a next best seller, like the author of "Simon Called Peter." It is difficult, no doubt, to believe there is a human side to the average literary extremist; and where it has been discovered one wishes very often that it hadn't. But this much may be said for him: dissembler though he is in professing outward scorn of the novel that has gone into its fiftieth thousand, there is no particle of envy for its writer in his secret soul. And yet it may be taken as a certainty that when he has returned to the solitude of his own chamber, he reads "If Winter Comes" or "Simon Called Peter" from cover to cover, it may be painfully but gamely, trying his utmost to detect by what mysterious alchemy their worldly-fortunate authors have been transformed in a twinkling to owners of Rolls-Royce cars (if they be so inclined) from patrons of the penny bus.

Nobody has discovered the recipe for the best seller, however. The student gives up his quest in a spirit of impotence, and it is this that the imperial sniff is concealing. But if you can take the extremely literary person unawares you may hear him granting that there is no such thing as a best seller which is entirely devoid of justification: even if it be merely the justification of administering to a human and not an artistic need. Imagination cannot be lent to those who do not possess it, and just as a certain class of man and woman turn to the daily illustrated paper to picture what cannot be pictured in their own minds, although passing under their noses all the time, so the unimaginative fiction reader turns to some particular novelist who is able to remove the bewilderment created by an imaginative lack. Such a novelist does not awaken the imagination: he sentimentalises, solidifies and glorifies his facts as facts, until they are focused before the reader like the "close-ups" at the cinema. Marie Bashkirtseff, that ill-fated woman whom Anatole France has called "the child without a childhood," recorded in her Journal that she prayed to God every morning and evening for a duke as a husband, a beautiful voice, and her mother's recovery from disease. Every woman and man, in her or his attenuated moments, is a Marie Bashkirtseff or the male equivalent. Certainly every woman of the type desires her aristocrat, a beautiful voice and the commonplace rest of it, even though at the end of her prayerful period she is content to fall in love, if not with the local schoolmaster, like the dying girl in Hauptmann's "Hannele," with the milkman or, at best, with a clerk who has manicured fingers.

Thus the novel that has become something else than a novel, that is, an extremely marketable commodity like soap or ladderless silk stockings, usually does so by virtue either of sentimentalising the ordinary domestic facts of contemporary existence or of transporting the reader into the glamorous, very desirable world which is hopelessly beyond his or her reach except in a dream. Mr. Keable, we imagine, will admit this readily; and if he were inclined to proffer an additional reason for the astonishingly wide circulation of his more recent books it would be that his earlier volumes had attracted an audience by no means negligible, one which formed the nucleus of his novel-reading public. This nucleus was essentially thoughtful and earnest. It had probably been unaccustomed to any lighter form of literature than the theological homily or the dissertation on ethics and morality. But just as a clergyman of our acquaintance

Mr. Robert Keable.

once found to his dismay that when he was transferred to a neighbouring parish half his old congregation deserted the old church for the new, so, when Mr. Keable adopted a different form of literary expression, his old readers were known to be a considerable percentage of the ninety-two thousand who, so far, have acquired copies of his first novel, a considerable percentage of the forty-four thousand who have acquired copies of "The Mother of All Living," and a considerable percentage of the still avid folk who have already sent to a fourth printing his most recent novel, "Peradventure, or the Silence of God."

For Mr. Keable, as we need hardly be reminded, is an Anglican clergyman, an English *padre*, all the time. Born thirty-five years ago, the association of art and theology began during his school period at Whitgift Grammar School, Croydon. In addition to editing the school magazine, he was a Whitgift gold and silver medallist for prose and verse in 1905. At Cambridge University he contributed to church papers and missionary reviews as well as to "The Granta." Not only did he join the 'Varsity missionary campaigns up and down the provinces, afterwards writing their history, while in his vacations he worked with the late Henry Hutchinson of the Children's Special Service Mission: he also became the first President of the Pepysian Literary Society for the encouragement of original verse and prose at Magdalene, formed the acquaintance of Rupert Brooke and Mr. Michael Sadleir, and contributed poems to the first "Anthology of Cambridge Verse." In his own literary work he had the assistance and encouragement of Mr. A. C. Benson, and as a theological student he was so profoundly influenced by Father Waggett and the late Robert Hugh Benson that he gradually abandoned his evangelical position for that of Anglican Catholicism. He was ordained a priest in 1912, and sailed forthwith to British East Africa as tutor in the training college for native missionary priests. "Darkness or Light," his first book, published by the Y.M.C.A. in the same year, was a study in the history of this work, and the volume called "Songs of the Narrow Way," issued by Mowbrays two years later, was an attempt to express various phases of missionary life in verse.

Those who have noted how much first-hand experience is related in Mr. Keable's novels—"Peradventure," for example, introduces Cambridge and Zanzibar, Mr. Benson and Father Waggett, and the Children's Special Service Mission—will not be surprised to find that "Darkness or Light" and the book of verses were experiments in a method he has pursued ever since: that of going about his strenuous activities with a pencil and notebook, literally as well as metaphorically, in his fingers. "The Loneliness of Christ" ("Studies in the Discipline of Life") was published by Nisbet in the same year (1915) as "A City of the Dawn," which is a record of work in a tropical city. A children's study book, "The Adventures of Paul Kangai," appeared in 1916 with the imprint of the Y.M.C.A., for whom the author had acted as a temporary secretary prior to the war. "The Perpetual Sacrifice" ("Meditations on the Death of God the Son") was published by Nisbet in 1917; "This Same Jesus" (Nisbet) and "The Drift of Pinions" (Skeffington) in 1918. Then, a year later, came the book which put its author on the road to finding his most profitable, if not his most literary vocation. "Standing By" was the outcome of his work on the Western Front, to which he had gone from Basutoland in December, 1916, as Chaplain to the South African native labour contingent, although he had been refused a chaplaincy by the British authorities at the outbreak of hostilities on account of ill-health.

While in France Mr. Keable wrote "The First Black Ten Thousand" for the S.P.C.K., but it was censured out of existence as being too sympathetic to the native question in South Africa. In "Standing By" is an echo of this and certain other controversies, although the main importance of the book lies in its tentative dealing with the problems that have concerned him so anxiously in his first two novels. "Pilgrim Papers," published by Christophers in 1920, is a companion volume, with much the same value. No one who has been attracted by Mr. Keable's happy, troubled temperament as revealed in his fiction can properly understand him without reading these thoughtful, charming, homely and helpful essays, written by a second though far more human Robert Hugh Benson. Mr. Keable has recognised in life just two problems. The first, he tells us in "Pilgrim Papers," is "the adjustment of Nature and Religion," the second "the discovery of the true Religion." Here are some characteristic passages relating to them:

"Possibly I have not said much about the first, but it undoubtedly stands first. It is always in my mind as I ride about on the face of this old Berg, and I fail to see how it can help being there, since one is so close to Nature up here. Among the flowers and mountains under the sun and the stars, and dealing with natives, one is truly close to Nature, and I am bound to confess that I find Nature a great problem. . . . Take, for example, the big sexual questions. Nature is out to breed men—and microbes—as hard as she can. She has designed the sexes to attract one another, and love is really her little joke. . . . And I realise that this visible world is only a tiny matter in comparison with the invisible that touches us at every turn. The whole of it, Nature and all its laws, is but the garment of something else. I am more sure of these things than of anything else. Maybe I am a colossal fool, but honestly, as I look out over these mountains, I see the spiritual a thousand times more clearly than the material. A flower dumbfounds me, for although I see the flower, I see far more plainly God."

"Simon Called Peter" and "The Mother of All Living" might be summed up as Mr. Keable's first unfettered attempt to make the adjustment of Nature and Religion, and "Peradventure," his equally unfettered preparation for a discovery of the true religion. Unfettered in an extra sense is this "Peradventure," for he had worked out of his mind in its forerunners the material unrest which took hold of him during his observations and duties as a chaplain in Flanders. As a consequence of his conviction (expounded in "Peradventure") that Anglicanism and Protestantism have broken down, Mr. Keable has resolved upon a complete devotion to literature immediately he returns to England after his present tour in the Pacific and Malay Straits. And, considered with all these pleasantly human implications in view, his latest novel is easily the most interesting and satisfying of the three.

THOMAS MOULT.

THE READER.

THE COLOUR OF CHRISTMAS:

THIRTEEN CHRISTMAS COLOUR-BOOKS AND THEIR ARTISTS.

By G. S. Layard.

THERE is not much risk, I think, in prophesying no inconsiderable immortality for one, at least, of the books with which I shall deal in this article and, this being said, I have no hesitation in giving an easy precedence to "Rossetti and His Circle," by Max Beerbohm.[1]

Photo by Elliott & Fry. **Mr. Max Beerbohm.**

In a characteristic preface, Mr. Beerbohm, making his apologia for presenting the portraits of men he had never set eyes upon in the flesh, concludes: "Old drawings and paintings, early photographs and the accounts of eye-witnesses, have not, however, been my only aids. I have had another and surer aid, of the most curious kind imaginable. And some day I will tell you all about it, if you would care to hear." Now to me that is a very intriguing statement, for I have, in my turn, studied Max for many a long year without having set eyes on *him*, and yet I can say with my hand on my heart that although I have known all his portraits, all his literary and pictorial works, I too have "had another and surer aid of the most curious kind imaginable," by which I have arrived at what I believe to be a full and proper appreciation of *him*. Whether I will ever tell you about it is quite another thing. You will have to make it quite clear first that you wish to hear the Sage of Rapallo's confession.

To Mr. Beerbohm, Rossetti was the most interesting man of the last century, only challenged by the romantic figures of Byron and Disraeli. Here is what he writes of him. What he says of him with his pencil and paint-box is even better, but that you can only see by getting hold of the book itself Addressing the twentieth century world, he says: "Perhaps you have never heard of Rossetti. . . . But even you, flushed though you are with the pride of youth, must have heard of the Victorian Era. Rossetti belonged to that—though indeed he was born nine years before it began and died of it nineteen years before it was over. For him the eighteen-fifties and sixties had no romance at all. For me I confess they are very romantic—partly because I wasn't alive in them, and partly because Rossetti was." Now that is very interesting too, because it indicates a limitation in Mr. Beerbohm. I agree with him as to the romance of the eighteen-fifties and sixties, but for myself, I find the nineteen-twenties just as romantic, partly because I am alive in them, and partly because Mr. Beerbohm, too, is most interestingly alive at Rapallo, which I think means that romance lives in our hearts and is not limited by time or space. This brings me to the point of this delightful gallery of our Pre-Raphaelites. Mr. Beerbohm endows them with complements of his own romantic needs, and they serve him as well as, if not better, than he has ever been served before.

No doubt some of us will turn the page rather hurriedly where Mr. Jowett is depicted asking Rossetti what his creations will do with the Grail when they find it, for Mr. Beerbohm is rather naughty there, but surely all of us will linger lovingly, though regretfully, over "A Momentary Vision that Befell Young Millais," laughingly over "Blue China"—(how beautifully drawn is Carlyle's portrait after Whistler!)—"Ford Madox Brown being patronised by Holman Hunt," Rossetti trying to prevail on Christina to abandon her "pew-opener" dress and have one made of Liberty silk, George Meredith exhorting Rossetti to set forth on a walk to Hendon and beyond: indeed, all in this wonderful gallery, in which the portraits are more like the people than ever the people were themselves.

As I have said, Rossetti is the hero of this book, mainly because, with Disraeli, he was a Great Alien. Complex and elusive, born outside their proper spheres, the Jew "who should have been Grand Vizir to some Sultan of a bygone age," the Italian who would have been at home "in the *Quattrocento* and by the Arno," they were portents in Victorian London's "deep, smug, thick, rich, drab, industrial complacency." In Mr. Beerbohm's words "Rossetti shone, for the men and women who knew him, with the ambiguous light of a red torch somewhere in a dense fog." That is a simile which, carried out in these entrancing pictures, puts in proper perspective the other great-little men of the period. Millais who, had it not been for the moor in Scotland and Pears' soap, might at his zenith have been quite other than the nurse of little Miss Muffet; "Topsy" Morris who might have been so much greater an artist had his great heart been smaller; Burne-Jones, the anæmic shadow of the master; Ruskin, eager enough prophet but too much bewildered with the problems of this world and the next to arrive at anything definite; Whistler, the gamin, wasting half his genius in fighting enemies not worth a thought; Carlyle, castrate of any feeling for carnal beauty; Tennyson waiting, perhaps in vain, for the halo of immortality; Browning succumbing to the world's slow strain; with George Augustus Sala, a very Puck amongst the Olympians, bringing up the rear. All these, and a score more, touched off with a beauty

[1] 25s. (Heinemann.)

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of ugliness that can hardly be overpraised. For, to my mind, Mr. Beerbohm has, in this gallery, surpassed himself. Reviewing "A Survey" last year, I found him a little much too concerned with his technique. Here I find him giving free rein to fancy and letting his pencil take care of itself and do its work unconsciously and well.

Personally I keep Mr. Beerbohm's volumes of caricature always by me as cathartics; purges to cure melancholy; quite necessary antidotes to the nostalgia of ineptitude to which the poor writer so often finds himself victim.

But that is not all, or nearly all, Mr. Beerbohm's worth to the world. At a time when everybody is shouting as loud as he can to prove his Importance, he stands by as Looker-on, and shows how little are our greatest when we come to look at them with Detachment in the Perspective of the Past. Let him see to it that he continues to wave his jester's wand to remind "the transitory idols of the hour" how small they will look when History comes to be written. Undoubtedly this is the Christmas volume of the year so far as the grown-ups and intellectuals are concerned. But it is for the children that Christmas books are primarily meant, the grown-up children who ride on horseback and hunt the fox, as well as the authentic infants who have not yet doffed the pinafore nor donned the *toga virilis* or the linen chiton. Amongst the former, "Right Royal," by John Masefield, illustrated by Cecil Aldin,[2] will undoubtedly be first favourite.

L.N.A. photo. **Mr. Cecil Aldin.**

I shall speak later of the unequal yoking of pen and pencil. It is a pleasure to turn to the well-assorted wedlock of Mr. Masefield's poetry and Mr. Cecil Aldin's pictures. Here the artist has surpassed himself in his brilliant and conscientious interpretation of the poet. These are true illustrations, for they throw light upon, illuminate the text. Poem and pictures gallop along side by side and make a dead heat of it, from the delightful plan of the steeplechase course, to which one constantly turns, to the breathless climax of the race's finish; from the moment when, as Charles Cothill

> " . . . knotted the reins and took his stand,
> The horse's soul came into his hand,
> And up from the mouth that held the steel
> Came an innermost word, half thought, half feel—
> 'My day to-day, O master, O master;
> None shall jump cleaner, none shall go faster' "—

to the immense moment when Right Royal wins the race.

It is all as it should be, and I can imagine few things more delightful than a fine sporting family of young people ending the day, before a huge log fire on Christmas Eve, listening to Mr. Masefield's inspiriting verse and, despite the natural drowsiness induced by a good run with the hounds, rousing themselves to peep over the shoulder of the reader to see how that artist-fellow, Aldin, has pictorially represented this, that and the other episode. This is in every sense a Right Royal book.

[2] 15s. (Heinemann.)

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. Jean de Bosschère.**

I regret to say that the same cannot be said for "The History of Don Quixote de la Mancha," with illustrations by Jean de Bosschère, and an essay by J. B. Trend.[3]

Beautifully produced and printed it does credit to its distinguished publishers, but I cannot but think does too much honour to its illustrator. Clever, no doubt, M. de Bosschère's work is both in colour and black-and-white, but temperamentally jealous for the great masterpieces of Literature, I perhaps too readily resent what must, I think, be admitted to be an unequal yoking of pen and pencil. Goya might possibly have done justice to the immortal Don. Certainly Hogarth lamentably failed, and where he failed few have ever succeeded.

It has been said that Cervantes "smiled Spain's chivalry away." That is so in a sense. But he did much more than that. He distinguished the false from the true. He realised and completed the whole spirit of knight-errantry. The perfection of Don Quixote depends on the skill with which heroic sentiment is fused with comic narrative. That, it seems to me, condemns these illustrations out of hand, for M. de Bosschère emphasises the grotesque, and thus overlays the fine philosophy and essential beauty. Personally I think the Don had best be left alone in the perfection of Cervantes' pages and, if Englished in Shelton's magnificent translation, a course wisely pursued in the present instance, he will be found quite able to take care of himself without any adventitious trappings.

Of the classical coloured books for children, "Alice in Wonderland"[4]—text by Lewis Carroll, illustrated by Gwynedd M. Hudson—will be first favourite.

To those of us who were brought up on Tenniel's illustrations to "Alice" it is of course almost sacrilege to think of any others, but it must be at once admitted that, had we not set eyes on *them*, we should be enraptured, as modern children will be, by Miss Gwynedd Hudson's delightful treatment of the most entrancing of all children's stories. She is reverent, conscientious and original, and the clean transparent colours of her drawings are so well reproduced that even the artist may be found grateful! Occasionally Miss Hudson's clever work betrays the influence of the master, for

[3] 21s. (Constable.)
[4] 20s. Edition de Luxe, limited to 200 copies, signed by the artist, £2 2s. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. Arthur Rackham.**

example, in the "portraits" of The Duchess and perhaps of the flamingo, but after all, Duchesses are often very like themselves and flamingoes do have a family likeness in the eyes of humans, whatever they may have among themselves, and so that is perhaps a little hypercritical. The "Mad Tea Party" is a triumph, as also is the "Caterpillar's Advice" and the charming frontispiece of "Alice and Dinah."

Artist, publisher and printer are to be congratulated on a fine collaboration. And, to be quite frank, I ought to add that, notwithstanding an abiding loyalty to Tenniel and a great press of work, I have read the whole book through once again, and succumbed to every one of the clever lady's illuminating illustrations.

From the same publishing house comes another fine and attractive volume, "Hawthorn's Wonder Book," illustrated by Arthur Rackham.[5] By those who are not tired of this clever artist's conventions—and I fancy they must run into innumerable thousands—this book will be heartily welcomed. For his dainty little ivory-coloured puppets dance through these pages as they have danced through the pages of Peter Pan and a score of other Christmas books, and will, I suppose, so go on dancing for many a year to come. Personally I get more pleasure out of the charming end papers and the little black-and-white conceits and grotesques scattered about these pages than out of even so pretty a coloured picture as that of the mermaids with whom "we do not consider it proper to be acquainted, because they have sea-green hair and taper away like fishes." For I like Mr. Rackham best when he gets away from the formulas he has invented and to which he constantly recurs. However he knows what his public wants, and it is all to the good that he should, with his pretty pictures, draw their attention once again to the wholesome charm of the American master and so revive "The Tanglewood Tales" as a household word in many a happy home.

From Messrs. Duckworth, with whom, by the way, I have a bone to pick for disfiguring their title page with a rubber-stamp, presumably for the purpose of making the book unsaleable should the poor reviewer desire to sell it, which this one does not as it has already been appropriated by a sister-in-law, comes an exceedingly dainty and attractive little volume, which will be welcomed by all the children who have revelled in the "Just So" stories. For it is no disrespect to "The Armfields' Animal Book," by Constance Smedley, with pictures by Maxwell Armfield,[6] to discover its direct descent from Mr. Kipling's outstanding accomplishment in the same genre. Nor are "How the Turtles Learnt to Differ," "How the Horse Looked Ahead," "How the Camel Unbent," and the rest of these accurately observed and very humorous stories, unworthy relatives of "How the Leopard Got His Spots." And as nothing could be better for their purpose than Mr. Armfield's dainty illustrations to his gifted wife's pen, I prophesy for this volume a large circle of enthusiastic admirers.

From the same domestic collaboration we get "The Winter's Tale," with twelve coloured plates painted in tempera by Maxwell Armfield.[7] For here are demonstrated, for those interested in what it is hoped will prove a true Renaissance of the English-speaking stage, the methods employed by Miss Constance Smedley and her husband in their remarkable productions in the Greek Theatre of Chicago. This is a book which will appeal to those who flocked to the magnificent Theatre Exhibition held last summer at the Victoria & Albert Museum. The ruling idea is the simplification of the *mise en scène* to that which was intended when the plays were written, a protest against the "realism" of the modern stage. A play is a play, and to pretend that it is anything else is to drag the revelations of art down to the illusory level of the commonplace. Of course the whole matter is highly controversial and reactionary, and Mr. and Mrs. Armfield have not said the final word. But it is a move in the right direction and will be therefore welcomed by all who are jealous for the future of the English-speaking Theatre.

From Mr. Jonathan Cape comes "The Christmas Stories of Charles Dickens," illustrated by Spencer Baird Nichols,[8] than which, with their wholesome optimism, nothing makes better reading at Christmas time both for children and grown-ups. That they will find in Mr. Nichols's illustrations satisfactory substitutes for the originals of Leech and Maclise, not to speak of the later ones by Charles and Townley Green, Fraser, French, Dalziel and Mahoney, can hardly be supposed. But it is all to the good to multiply the editions of fairy stories which at their best are the equal of any fairy stories in the world.

For the tiny child who cuddles safe in our arms the while she asks once again to be told the terrible and thrilling stories of Little Red Riding Hood, Bluebeard, Cinderella and the like, we have "Tales of Passed Times, written for children by Mr. Perrault, and newly decorated by John Austen,"[9] an edition of those immortal tales which have appealed to children time out of mind and will, I suppose, continue to appeal to all those tender creatures who have not been poisoned by too many chocolate éclairs and the other things which "go with evening dress."

Photo by Russell. **Mr. C. E. Brock.**

It is more than two hundred years since they first entranced the little French children in the days of

[5] 20s. (Hodder & Stoughton.)
[6] 8s. 6d. (Duckworth.)
[7] 18s. (Dent.)
[8] 12s. 6d. (Jonathan Cape.)
[9] 5s. (Selwyn & Blount.)

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the Grand Monarch, and it says much for Mr. Austen that he has undoubtedly added to their attractiveness by his brightly-coloured and dainty illustrations. I like his Bluebeard with his uncompromisingly azure "beaver," matching in colour the discreet pantalettes of his courageous little wife. I am glad to learn that the seven-league boots "which, being fairies, had the gift of becoming big and little" and so fitted Tom Thumb just as well as ever they did the Ogre from whom he stole them, had purple "uppers" and green tops, and that the Sleeping Beauty's red hair so exactly and entrancingly contrasted with the lovely green hair of the Prince who kissed her awake and lived happily with her ever after. Indeed this is a gay little volume over which all proper children will properly gloat.

Far from being the least admirable of this season's Christmas Colour Books is Messrs. Raphael Tuck & Sons' "Children's Stories from Rumanian Legends and Fairy Tales," by M. Gaster, Ph.D., illustrated by C. E. Brock, R.I.,[10] the latest volume to be added to the Raphael House Library of Gift-books, edited by Captain Edric Vredenburg. This is a book which, with its archaic, though attractive cover, smiles at you even before you open it. Nor does the inside belie its promise. For Mr. C. E. Brock is its illustrator, and what can you get in these days better than that? The "colour plates" and those in black-and-white are alike beyond praise. Brilliant and conscientious in execution they convey the very spirit of the late President of the English Folk-Lore Society's invaluable text, to which it is impossible to do a tenth-part of justice in the space at my command. In his very able hands their intrinsic beauty is fully preserved. They form a remarkable addition to the Folk Tales of the World.

From Messrs. George Harrap & Co. come "Ivanhoe," illustrated by Rowland Wheelwright,[11] and "The Fairy Tales of Perrault," illustrated by Harry Clarke, with an introduction by Thomas Bodkin.[12] The former I confess, though its format does credit to the publishers, leaves me cold. The illustrations seem to me to add little to the story. The "Perrault," on the other hand, has great and outstanding merit. It is a very different affair from the edition of the great French Academician's immortal stories mentioned above. There we found charming decorations appealing in their *naïveté* to the mind of the unspoiled child. Here we have able, but somewhat sinister, pictorial reflections on the stories of Cinderella, Bluebeard and the rest, which I sincerely hope will only find a response in the hearts and minds of the unspoiled child's elders. For it will be a bad day when the children are sufficiently sophisticated to take pleasure in the rather corrupt implications of what is undoubtedly very able work. Mr. Clarke is a follower, and no mean one, in the decorative footsteps of Aubrey Beardsley. Indeed the full-page of the Ogre Queen commanding the Cook to serve her grandchild, Aurora, for dinner, garnished with "a sauce Robert," is worthy of the master himself. And the same may be said of others of these remarkable designs. But Beardsley was hardly the man for babes and sucklings. From which it will be gathered that Mr. Clarke's skill and artistry is far more fitted to the satires of Pope or Swift than to tales consecrate to the days of our innocence. For my more hardened self I confess to an æsthetic enjoyment of these finely decorated pages, which, however, I do not desire to share *cum virginibus puerisque*.

Our baker's dozen of Christmas Colour Books is fittingly completed by Hans Andersen's "Fairy Tales," illustrated by Honor C. Appleton.[13] Beautifully printed in large type on a noble page, these perennial stories will make fresh appeal to a new generation of children. It was said rather cynically by Goethe that what annoys us in life we enjoy as a picture. It may be said with equal truth that what pleases us in fairy tales doubly pleases us when illustrated and illuminated by the sympathetic brush of the painter.

[10] 6s. (Raphael Tuck.)
[11] 10s. 6d. (Harrap.)
[12] 15s. (Harrap.)
[13] 10s. 6d. (Nelson.)

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

BY T. STURGE MOORE.

ON Christmas Eve, more of us should be grateful than will be, that a son was born one hundred years ago at Laleham to a young private tutor, the future reformer of Rugby School. When Matthew Arnold died, sixty-five years later, side whiskers—"weepers" as they were called—would alone have prevented a bust of his head from passing for that of some Greek sage or poet, contemporary of Pericles. This disfigurement may symbolise something which travesties much of his work, as though he wore the unbecoming livery of our fathers whom he served. But in essentials the head is grand, and so is the work. His first two volumes of poetry passed unnoticed; even the third made little impression, though all three contained poems which every one now ranks with or above Tennyson's best. This stupid reception added weight to the extraneous considerations, in view of which he devoted the main of his time to other work. The age was not ripe, he perceived, for the reception of the best poetry, and for more easily applauded kinds he felt hampered by the largeness and clearness of his mind, so left them to others. One cannot be just to Matthew Arnold, if it is forgotten that he never achieved that financial independence which he rightly thought neccssary for the finest poetical production. His poetry is a leisure hour and holiday creation. It ought not to be comparable to that of men like Wordsworth, Tennyson, Browning or Swinburne; if it does rival their best, then we may suppose that, in more propitious circumstances, it might have done more. I do not think "Empedocles" a success, but am increasingly forced to rank it higher than any poem of an equal length produced by the poets mentioned; nor do I think that Shelley and Keats were more fortunate in respect

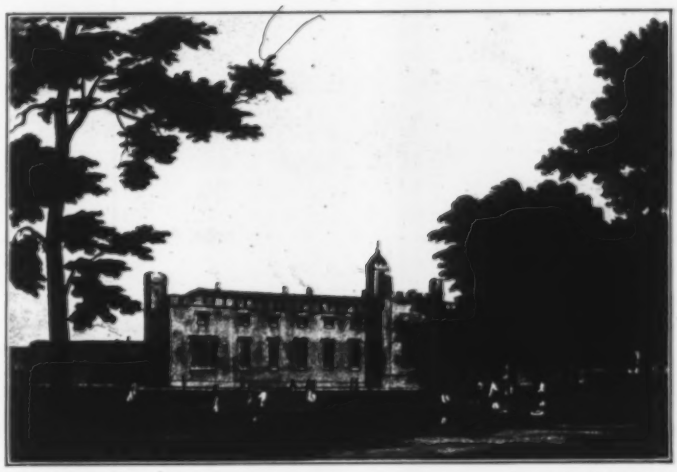
to such poems and much less Morris or Meredith. Among narratives "Sohrab and Rustum" is perhaps surpassed by "Michael," the "Ruined Cottage" and "Lamia"; it is certainly inferior to "The Ancient Mariner," which however is less properly compared with it. In spite of the slightly professional air of its filial reverence for Homer, no blank verse episode in the language so well bears reading aloud. This is due to its simple and powerful structure, and to the fact that everything in it is subordinate to the main effect. "The Scholar Gipsy" might easily have belonged to that class of poetry which is often simply called "stanzas," because it lacks the organism of a poem. "Dolores," "The Triumph of Time," "Love in the Valley" or Arnold's own "New Syrens," like the slow-worm, are helplessly inclined to break in two or more fragments; their lovers gloat over them as "marvellous stuff," because they lack the main essentials of form; such poems cease by the Grace of God, having no inborn reason for ending. Not so "The Scholar Gipsy," though when I first read it I wrote "the middle-aged man panting up the hill Keats climbed a tip-toe";* if there was any excuse for my petulance, it was the less adventurous diction. But the grandest beauties are not those first or most easily perceived. Arnold was not able to repeat the miracle in "Thyrsis," though as "stanzas" it is not inferior. In shorter poems "The Forsaken Merman," "Mycerinus," "Stragirius," "The Voice," "Dover Beach" and "A Southern Night" are all perfect shapes. No doubt not only Browning and Tennyson but Swinburne, with his "Ballad of Life" and his "Sapphics," can rival Arnold in poems of this length. One, perhaps two, of his best sonnets are surpassed only by Rossetti since Wordsworth, and in the short lyric he shows his "Requiescat" and "To Fausta" with the interludes from "Empedocles." Still there remains a bulk of work which yields perfect passages: several series of dazzling stanzas from "The New Syrens" and "To a Gipsy Child," that splendid five from "The Grande Chartreuse," beginning "Achilles ponders in his tent," and what a gold mine is "Tristram"! Has anyone, had Keats himself, obtained so divine a limpidity from the rhymed couplet? Nor has any writer of so-called "free verse" produced a composition to compare with "The Strayed Reveller," though Mr. Flint's "Otherworld" is a fine attempt, and Mr. Aldington's "In the Trenches" a fine success. Then too, there is all that secondary, merely pragmatical poetry in which the ruling ideas of his prose works are found condensed, but without the sensuous freedom and organic development of true works of art. Lastly the excellent subjects he had hoped to treat must not be overlooked—the tragedy on "Lucretius," "The Gudrune and Brunhilde," "The Siegfried and Fafnir," etc., or the "Balder Dead" that he wrote when it was already too late. This was a poet indeed, and I cannot place before him any of his contemporaries, save Rossetti who also gave the main of his time and energy to another kind of work, and looked on poetry as a recreation.

Matthew Arnold,
After the drawing by Sanders.

* I was wrong on the matter of fact—Arnold was only thirty when he wrote it, Keats twenty-six when he died.

PROSE WORK.

Arnold's literary criticism is disappointing, though it had far more immediate effect than his poetry. He certainly gave us the best we have had since Coleridge, and gave it in far better form, yet the preface to "Poems, 1853" was never equalled again. His "Essays in Criticism" were too frequently preoccupied with literature as a social agent; they tend rather to prepare a public than to discover principles of taste or illumine works of art. He who had proclaimed "the necessity of accurate construction, and the subordinate character of expression" was soon understood to propose the smallest part, a single line, as the touchstone of literary excellence. The fault lay largely with hasty readers, but not wholly. Yet how could a critic have been more unfortunate? His lectures "On Translating Homer" opened the door; the construction was not considered, it was always the same, that is Homer's, so attention was focused on the shades by which various styles differed from that style. When he wrote the introduction to the "Study of Poetry," he applied the standards arrived at in the Homer Lectures to more recent poetry, the major virtues of construction were barely glanced at, and indeed were not to be represented in the anthology he was introducing. His style became over-explanatory and cumbrous, and there are surprisingly few fine pages or even periods, though the interest is maintained by



Rugby School,
as it was in Matthew Arnold's time.

simplicity of outline and numerous well defined distinctions: but these virtues are so rare, especially in English, that perhaps better judges will hold that they redeem the slightly officious prolixity of his too conscious wish to help.

A few of his particular judgments like that on Shelley's poetry are grotesque, yet undoubtedly he was better endowed for criticism than his admired Sainte-Beuve whose strength lay in the appreciation of persons rather than of works, and of secondary rather than of great characters.

RELIGIOUS CRITICISM.

Arnold's weakness as a critic was largely due to his unique value as a social agent. His main effort in prose was directed elsewhere; and attempted to harmonise modern science with religion, without compromise. In this field he proved extremely original; for, unlike Dean Inge and how many others, he reserved nothing, even God was subject for experiment. There was no compromise. He perhaps moulded his procedure on that of Socrates, who always began with his interlocutor's ideas. So he attempted always to lead his readers from what he knew to be their ideas towards his own. This has done him a grave wrong with posterity. His own books and the course of events rendered the ideas of the generation he addressed quickly obsolete, yet so much of his space had been taken up that, though in a less degree than in literary criticism, he hardly arrived at the free and full exposition of his thought. I do not think he was blind to this fact either in regard to literary, religious or political criticism, but with the examples of Socrates and Jesus always in view, I think he sacrificed that advantage he might have won with the next generation in order to help those in immediate need, and in helping them he marvellously succeeded, but his achievement ranks higher as a humane action than as literature. The idea on which he founded such books as "God and the Bible" and "Literature and Dogma" was that the religious life is properly and always has been a series of experiments directed towards the discovery of the conditions essential for inward happiness. The beginning and end of this inquiry, like that of all others, was from the necessity of man's situation lost in ignorance. The incomplete truths discovered like those revealed by science could not exist in a description or formula, but only in the facts, in this case those of the spiritual life. Arnold with infinite patience and bonhomie tried to make this incontrovertible conception real to those who felt religion slipping from beneath their feet; for he addressed no others. He had no quarrel with science, only with scientists who jumped to brutal and hasty conclusions, and in so doing resembled the fanatics of dogma. If men's tempers were depressed or debauched by a sense of helplessness in the world of forces, what prevention, what cure could there be, but the sense of inward victory and content? This had been won by the saints, who owed it not to their delusions, but achieved it in spite of them. Besides, a method considerably elaborated had been evolved, so that we need not now start in the dark. The central impulse was found in the "know thyself" of Socrates, the "taste and see" of the Psalmist, the "learn of me" of Jesus. But as often happened in other inquiries, poetical rhapsodies, tentative definitions, premature hypotheses, worshipped as dogma, arrested progress, till some fresh religious genius freed the effort once more. By glancing over the vast prospects of outward history a corresponding natural order or law might be divined. Thus modern piety and culture were united to the most inspiring epochs, and the soul could view its own most intimately sanctioned efforts as part of an universal process. With what constancy he himself applied this method may be gathered from his published "Note-Books," which show us under the garb of a smiling man of the world, a discipline like that sackcloth found beneath gay raiment on the young bride of Giacopone di Todi.*

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CRITICISM.

Those who have read and reread "Culture and Anarchy" and "Friendship's Garland" realise with what charm and sagacity he arrested attention in the sphere of politics. In his youth, private secretary to Lord Lansdowne, then continually travelling the country first on circuit with his father-in-law the judge, afterwards as school inspector, a welcome guest in a great variety of homes, he held necessary converse with thousands of all classes, and varied this life with holidays abroad and special missions to inspect foreign schools: thus he had enjoyed unique advantages for studying the growth of opinion both within and beyond government circles. "Might must rule till right is ready" and "the prince of this world is judged," as he loved to quote. And right is only ready when it can persuade those who have the advantage to forego at least a part of it. Until this happens, politics is merely the mechanical interplay of various interests devoid of intelligence and virtue. But what can persuade the wealthy to forego their advantage? Why! interest in wider and more significant aspects of life. Illumine the landscape round them and you arrest them in the exploitation of their victims, engage them in effort for ends that do not affect or perhaps even tell against their private fortunes. Nevertheless the satisfaction of mind and soul thus achieved, will react to their bodily benefit, being one of the main sources of physical health:

> "He only lives, with the world's life
> Who has renounced his own."

"Docile echoes of the eternal voice, pliant organs of the infinite will, such workers are going along with the essential movement of the world; and this is their strength, and their happy and divine fortune."

His "Merope," though too much a professor's demonstration to rank as a free creation, yet comes next to Shakespeare in treatment of a political situation with living comprehension of its various aspects for diverse characters and interests. It is indeed packed with wisdom.

OTHER ASPECTS.

Had all these interests in which he displayed such profound capacity directly nourished works of art; what masterpieces they might have been! As it was his Muse gradually confined and lowered her note.

* See his sonnet "Austerity of Poetry."

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Yet occasion for the existence of the grandest poetical flights is only found in highly complex works, fed by a full experience. Some will carp that he might have achieved a greater measure of independence had he lived a simpler life, but that would have meant breaking with pieties and claims he felt bound to respect; it might also have meant starving those very capacities it aimed at freeing. I have read that when dining at Kettner's or some such place, he answered a regret sighed towards mountain freedom to this effect: "My dear Morley, think, Wordsworth at Rydal lived the life of a farmer; how much more worthy creatures of a wide discourse is our life here; how much more intelligence, how much more elasticity of temper, how much finer a palate the day requires of us."

His writings on education are of unique value, and as school inspector he was a great success. I have been told that, when listening to some child stumbling in its reply, he would encourage it. "Go on, my dear, go on; it's all wrong, but never mind, go on." That is symbolical of his attitude, no eyes saw more clearly than his that all was wrong, yet for him the essence of man's spirit was goodwill which does the best it can, poor though that may be, and is strengthened thereby. He had not been, as my lazy youth took for granted, always middle-aged, but so hearty as to perpetrate without a wince

"Ere the parting kiss be dry,"

and madly to follow Rachel, the great tragédienne, from Edinburgh to Paris and never miss a single performance during two whole months. Yet it was the same youth whom George Sand described as "un Milton jeune et voyageant," and who a few years later addressed himself or any kindred spirit, "O seeming sole to awake . . ."

"Thin, thin the pleasant human noises grow,
And faint the city gleams;
Rare the lone pastoral huts—marvel not thou!
The solemn peaks but to the stars are known;
But to the stars, and the cold lunar beams;
Alone the sun arises, and alone
Spring the great streams."

"LITTLE WOMEN": AN APPRECIATION.

BY ANGELA BRAZIL.

TO girls one of the most acceptable gift-books of the Christmas season will surely be this new and beautiful edition de luxe of "Little Women," by Louisa M. Alcott.*

In the days of my own youth I had revelled in the story, despite the bad print and lack of illustrations of a cheap edition, so I confess that when I saw it in this glorious new dress, with the lovely pictures giving such charming portraits of those dearest of old friends and playmates, Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy, I just sat down at once, and started to re-read it with all the rapture of my early teens. There are some girlhood tales which we skim through again, and wonder how our callow taste ever tolerated them, but to make re-acquaintance, after a gap of many years, with Miss Alcott's immortal masterpiece is to rejoice in it afresh, with the added appreciation of its true literary value.

What is the secret of the fascination of this story, which for more than fifty years has remained a prime favourite on both sides of the Atlantic? Why are the names of the members of the March family household words? Why are their little doings as familiar to most of us as the remembrance of the adventures of our own sisters and brothers? The answer to these questions lies, I think, in the fact that Louisa May Alcott had the genius to present to us, in her lovable heroines, four absolutely human girls exactly as she knew them in real life. She painted their pen-portraits with the faithfulness of a mistress of her craft, exaggerating neither virtues nor faults, and making us sympathise alike with their heroic little sacrifices or their many imperfections. In this style of writing she was a pioneer. Turn to most of the juvenile stories of fifty or sixty years ago, and you will find that the heroine was not so much a study of a real girl as a peg upon whom the authoress might hang her pet opinions, and into whose mouth were often put sentiments of so stilted a character that we can hardly imagine anybody young—outside a book—would ever express them, and certainly not in such flowery language.

How different are Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy! Their conversation is so natural that you can fancy you are sitting by their fireside and listening to them as they chat. How we love their grumbles and their little vanities, and are thrilled when Jo burns Meg's curls with the hot tongs, or when Amy goes to sleep with a clothes-pin on her nose, to try to uplift that offending feature in preparation for a party. We get to know them all so well, Meg with her girlish craving for the pretty things of life, brusque, hot-tempered, amusing Jo, gentle sweet-tempered Beth, and artistic, ambitious, little Amy, with her mispronounced long words, and her sense of sedate self-importance. Although they lived and worked during the time of the great American Civil War, they never seem out of date. Bob their hair, and dress them in knitted jumpers, and they would take their places as easily in 1923 as in 1861.

It is only an author who has the greatness and the simplicity to write of girls as she sees them, and not of girls as she thinks they ought to be, whose creations will thus outlast the march of the years.

One point worthy of special notice in the story of "Little Women" is Miss Alcott's skilful treatment of the struggles of a family of small means to make ends meet. There is never anything sordid in the descriptions, and the reader is carried away with enthusiasm for the little economies that go hand-in-hand with the charities, and sympathises heartily with the very natural longings expressed by the four heroines for the goods of this world. The humour of the book is delightful. Its racy language and joyousness of style carry us on from page to page with an interest that never flags from start to finish. We follow Meg through Vanity Fair, and Amy through the Valley of Humiliation,

* "Little Women." By Louisa Alcott. Illustrated by M. E. Gray. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

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with equal enjoyment, and laugh over Jo's unsuccessful efforts at cookery, and at the effusions of the Pickwick Club.

There is nothing sentimental about "Little Women," though of true sentiment we have tender touches. Can anything equal the pathos of the passage where Jo, mistaking sleep for death, believes that her favourite Beth has slipped over the divide?

"To her excited eyes a great change seemed to have taken place. The fever flush and the look of pain were gone, and the beloved little face looked so pale and peaceful in its utter repose, that Jo felt no desire to weep or to lament. Leaning low over this dearest of her sisters, she kissed the damp forehead with her heart on her lips, and softly whispered, 'Good-bye, my Beth; good-bye!'"

As if waked by the stir, Hannah started out of her sleep, hurried to the bed, looked at Beth, felt her hands, listened at her lips, and then, throwing her apron over her head, sat down to rock to and fro, exclaiming, under her breath, "The fever's turned; she's sleeping nat'ral, her skin's damp, and she breathes easy. Praise be given! Oh, my goodness me!"

Admirers of Miss Alcott's works have only one regret—that she did not live longer and write more. Personally I always wished she had given us a school story. My favourite chapter was the episode of the pickled limes at Mr. Davis's establishment, and while appreciating the spirit with which Amy bore her trying ordeal, snatched her things, and dramatically left the place "forever," I often regretted she had not patched up the quarrel, and gone back for further interesting scuffles with the irate master, or the sharp-tongued Jenny Snow, who made cutting remarks about "some persons whose noses were not too flat to smell other people's limes, and stuck up people who were not too proud to ask for them."

Oh, Amy March! How I lived with you in that supreme peep at your school days! Why did you let it all end so soon?

Louisa May Alcott must have been a very lovable personality, for it is an open secret that she put herself and her sisters into this most natural of stories, and that nearly all the experiences, grave or gay, pathetic or humorous, are bits from her early biography. She had the priceless gifts of laughter and of tears, and the talent which enabled her to express to other girls the charm and glamour of her own girlhood—no easy matter, for, by the time the necessary literary skill is obtained, the vision of youth is often lost to the writer, and only an elect soul can compass both.

I have heard of a boy who used to read the tales in a certain magazine until he came to the words "and now my dear young friends"—at which point he always flung the book violently away, knowing that he had skimmed the cream of the story and was getting to the more unpalatable portion which he wished to avoid. The "Sandford and Merton" type of composition was happily far away from Miss Alcott's ideals. She did not write "with a purpose," nor had her books any definite "mission." Yet her influence has been very great; she placed before growing girls a pure and high standard of conduct and aspiration, and showed the possibilities of heroism in "the daily round, the common task," though all in such a delightful, wholesomely human, and humorous fashion that nobody can accuse her heroines of priggishness or label them as "goody-goody." She wrote throughout for girls from a girl's point of view.

The illustrations by M. E. Gray for this beautiful edition of "Little Women" will meet with cordial appreciation; they are pictures in themselves, and give a most happy and realistic representation of how our friends, Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy, must have looked in the dear, old, brown house in America, which was their home. Beth with her dolls, Amy at Aunt March's, Meg as a fine lady, and Jo with her hair cut, are particularly attractive, also the frontispiece group of the sisters, and the sketch of the scene where they play "Pilgrim's Progress" in the fields. Is it too much to hope that we may have their further adventures in a companion volume, and that we can look forward, at another Christmas, to meeting "Little Women Wedded" in an equally delectable and delightfully illustrated edition de luxe?

R. S. SURTEES.

By S. M. ELLIS.

ROBERT SMITH SURTEES holds a position peculiarly his own in English literature, for though there have been many delineators of sporting life from Pierce Egan and "Nimrod" (Charles James Apperley) and Whyte-Melville to Hawley Smart and Nat Gould, his is a distinct and separate category. Surtees wrote of the humorous side of sport, of contretemps in the hunting field or stubble, of the fun supplied by embryo and indifferent sportsmen—generally Cockneys, as exemplified in particular by his immortal creation, John Jorrocks, grocer, of St. Botolph Lane, in the City, and Great Coram Street, Bloomsbury. Further, Surtees possesses the unusual and doubtful privilege of his works always obtaining a phenomenally high price. The reason for this can hardly be that the supply of his books, in various editions, has been unequal to the demand, for in view of the fact that there are no cheap copies of Surtees his readers are, of necessity, few. He has a special place of joy and honour, garbed in glorious binding, in what the booksellers term "a gentleman's library" at a big country house; but even there, probably, the illustrations are more often

looked at than the text. To the general reader, Surtees is merely a name; he may have heard of Mr. Jorrocks and Soapey Sponge, but would find it difficult to explain who these worthies were, and what they did in order to secure the sure place they fill in the great gallery of English fiction.

Why, then, are the works of Surtees always priced at a high figure? The usual answer is "Because of the illustrations by Leech and Alken." That is entirely a fallacious reason. Superb and truly delightful are the plates and woodcuts in question, but they are no better than other examples of the work of these artists which realise a much lower price in the book market. Again, a copy of Surtees's rare first book, "The Horseman's Manual," which has no illustrations at all, is worth more than one of the novels illustrated by Leech or Alken; and the first edition of "Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities," with twelve mediocre designs by "Phiz," is far more valuable than the third edition with Alken's fine coloured engravings. For a copy of this first edition the equivalent in dollars of £140 was recently asked in New York. There is no fixed scale for Surtees prices, and the real reason for the inflated financial value of his books remains a mystery; it is also matter for regret, because these prohibitive charges militate against the author's popularity and prevent him from being read as widely as he deserves.

And now for the man himself and the origin of his curious surname. R. S. Surtees belongs to the county of Durham. His family was of the most remote antiquity in the North, with a pedigree reaching back to Saxon times, when a certain Thane, named Orm, by his wife Ethelritha (daughter of Aldred, Earl of Northumberland) had a daughter, Egfrida, who married Ailsi de Teisa. The name de Tesia was derived from the estates of the family in proximity to the river Tees. In the thirteenth century two of its prominent representatives were known as Ralph and Walter Super Teysam. Later the cognomen was contracted to Sureteys, and in the seventeenth century the novelist's ancestor, Cuthbert, of Ebchester, spelt the name Surtees, as it has since remained. Through a long line of descendants, described as of Milkwell Burn, we come

Robert Smith Surtees,

From a portrait sent by his daughter, Eleanor Viscountess Gort.

to Anthony Surtees (1768–1838), a noted sportsman, of Hamsterley Hall, on the borders of Durham and Northumberland. He married, in 1801, Alice Blackett, of Wylam, and their second son, Robert Smith Surtees, the future novelist, was born in 1803.

The boy was educated at Durham Grammar School, and his hunting knowledge was acquired with the foxhounds of Mr. Ralph Lambton, of Merton House, Durham. Being a younger son, however, Surtees had to adopt a profession, and so, on leaving school in 1819, he decided for the Law. He proceeded to London for his training in a solicitor's office. Eventually he bought a partnership in a legal firm of Lincoln's Inn. It proved unsatisfactory, but being fortunate enough to recover his purchase money, Surtees decided to abandon the Law and devote himself to literary pursuits, for his future prospects were considerably changed by the death of his elder brother, Anthony, at Malta, on March 24th, 1831. He was now the prospective heir of Hamsterley, and this same year he started, in conjunction with Rudolph Ackermann, *The New Sporting Magazine:* previously he had contributed to the old *Sporting Magazine* some accounts of Mr. Ralph Lambton's foxhounds and other north country kennels. In his new venture, as editor, he secured the aid, as

Hamsterley Hall, Co. Durham,

the home of R. S. Surtees, and where most of his literary work was written.
From a view sent by his daughter, Eleanor Viscountess Gort.

contributor, of the great contemporary sporting writer, "Nimrod."*

In 1831, also, Surtees published his first book, "The Horseman's Manual," which he dedicated to his old friend and early mentor in the chase, Ralph Lambton. At this date Surtees was living at 27, Lincoln's Inn Fields, and his book was in reality a lawyer's treatise on warranty in relation to horses and on equine law in general. But he was soon to strike on a new and humorous vein of horse lore. In *The New Sporting Magazine*, May, 1831, he commenced a series of amusing sketches of a Cockney sportsman which developed into "Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities." The adventures of that great grocer and citizen, with his "large bay-window of a corporation," are for all time—in fact, in the words of his counsel, "Not to know Jorrocks is indeed to argue oneself unknown." Many of Jorrocks's sayings are now classic—"Punctuality is the politeness of princes"; "The Chase—I say, it's one of the balances of the Constitution—I say, it's the sport of kings, the image of war without its guilt"; "To be surrounded by one's friends is in my mind the 'Ai' of 'uman 'appiness"; "I leaves the flowers of speech to them as is better acquainted with botany. . . . I likes plain English, both in eating and talking"; and on the subject of drinks—"Water, a thing I never touch—rots one's shoes, don't know what it would do with one's stomach if it was to get there." It is true, though, that on one occasion Mr. Jorrocks "astonished his stomach" with the Cheltenham waters.

"Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities" were the inspiring origin of "The Pickwick Papers." It is curious that Forster and other biographers of Dickens make no mention of this obvious fact. Dickens relates that he was approached, in 1835–6, by Chapman and Hall with a scheme that he, in conjunction with Seymour, the artist, should produce a series of sketches relating the adventures of a Nimrod Club ("Nimrod," as we have seen, was a coadjutor with Surtees in *The New Sporting Magazine* wherein Jorrocks had appeared)—"the members of which were to go out shooting, fishing, and so forth, and getting themselves into difficulties through their want of dexterity." Thus the Pickwick Club replaced the Surrey Hunt and shooting excursions of Jorrocks, and at the outset Dickens followed the proposed plan, though, as he opined would be the case, he eventually broke away on the lines of his own genius "with a freer range of English scenes and people." But Winkle and his adventures with the horse from Rochester and on the ice at Dingley Dell are entirely on the Surtees model. Mr. Jorrocks figured in a legal case like Mr. Pickwick, and it is of interest to compare the two reports, and the similarity of the flowery but violent eloquence of the opposing counsel. Mr. Jorrocks was attacked by Mr. Sergeant Bumptious, Mr. Pickwick by Mr. Sergeant Buzfuz. Later on, Mr. Jorrocks observed, when travelling by "The Age" coach, "there was not even a bit of Christmas at the 'orses' ears"; so with that phrase he was before Mr. Weller, who directed the fat boy, when arranging the mince-pies, "to stick a bit o' Christmas in 'em."

> "The outside passengers mounted, the insides took their places, threepences and sixpences were pulled out for the porters, the guard twanged his horn, the coachman turned out his elbow, flourished his whip, caught the point, cried 'All right! sit tight!' and trotted out of the yard."

That is Mr. Jorrocks setting out for Newmarket, not the Pickwickians on the Muggleton coach *en route* for Dingley Dell in the splendid Christmas chapter.

In the character of "The Yorkshireman," who so often accompanies Mr. Jorrocks in his outings and adventures, Surtees probably intended to represent himself, and so was enabled to recount actual experiences of his own. He must often have traversed the Great North Road between London and Durham when coaching was at its highest degree of excellence and the Life of the Road most vivid. Surtees's books are not confined to sport and the humours of country life. They contain many entertaining glimpses of London, Brighton, Margate, and other places. His Londoners, it is interesting to note, talk with their W pronounced as V, and vice versa, like the Wellers did. When Mr. Jorrocks rode forth from Great Coram Street to attend a meet of the Surrey Hunt, the newsboys in the Strand called out: "Crikey, a hunter. . . . Vot a beauty! Vere do you turn out to-day? Vere's the stag? Vot a vip the gemman's got!" I have never heard it explained how and when this particular flower of Cockney speech faded. If the London boys of 1831 talked like this, why did they not do the same as old men, when they came within our purview or, rather, hearing? Personally, I only remember meeting one man, a former publican, who spoke in this way of Villiam and so on. Yet, according to Dickens, Surtees, and other contemporary writers, all Londoners of the lower class pronounced the W as V, and V as W, eighty years ago.

Like Dickens, Surtees delighted in the description of gastronomical details and unlimited hospitality, whether at Christmas or any other time. Witness Mr. Jorrocks's Hunt Breakfast in the kitchen at Great Coram Street. It would have been terrible to read during the food control of a few years ago this menu for a dinner party of eight persons at the same hospitable house:

> "Before both Mr. and Mrs. Jorrocks were two great tureens of mockturtle soup, each capable of holding a gallon, and both full up to the brim. Then there were two sorts of fish; turbot and lobster sauce, and a great salmon. A round of boiled beef and an immense piece of roast occupied the rear of these . . . and then came two dishes of grouse, each dish holding three brace. The side dishes consisted of a calf's head hashed, a leg of mutton, chickens, ducks, and mountains of vegetables . . . plum-puddings, tarts, jellies, pies, and puffs."

"Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities" were not reissued in book form until 1838. This rare first edition with twelve illustrations by "Phiz" is seldom to be seen: it is not in the British Museum Library. The well-known third edition with H. Alken's admirable illustrations in colour appeared in 1869, long after the author's death. Surtees's friend and chief contributor to *The New Sporting Magazine*, "Nimrod," was also a contributor to *The Quarterly Review* (where his papers on "The Chase," "The Turf" and "The Road" appeared), and

* *The New Sporting Magazine* was a close imitation, both in style and appearance, of *The Sporting Magazine*, which dated from 1793. The latter regarded its new rival with great dislike, and launched attacks several times on the plea of defending the Surrey Hunt, which had been ridiculed by Surtees in his "Jorrocks" sketches.

JORROCKS'S HUNT BREAKFAST IN THE KITCHEN AT GREAT CORAM STREET.

From Illustrations by HENRY ALKEN in "JORROCKS'S JAUNTS AND JOLLITIES"

MR. JORROCKS INTRODUCES THE YORKSHIREMAN TO THE SURREY HUNT
The Yorkshireman was intended for R. S. Surtees, the author of the book, and the scene was a wayside inn near Croydon.

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From "THE DODO'S EGG."
By KATHLEEN COALES
(Philpot).

"TREATED HER AS IF SHE WERE OF NO ACCOUNT WHATEVER."

the editor of the latter review, John Lockhart, becoming acquainted with Mr. Jorrocks, observed of Surtees, "That fellow could write a good novel if he liked to try." The suggestion was duly passed on by "Nimrod," and acted upon by Surtees, with the result that Mr. Jorrocks reappeared, now as a Master of Foxhounds, in "Handley Cross, or the Spa Hunt," a novel in three volumes, published by Colburn in 1843. The edition of 1854, with John Leech's famous illustrations, was renamed "Handley Cross, or Mr. Jorrocks's Hunt." Leech drew his conception of Jorrocks's face and figure from a coachman, named Nicholls, in the service of Lady Louisa Clinton. "Handley Cross" was a very successful work, and Surtees devoted his first substantial literary earnings to building a new bridge in the grounds of Hamsterley Hall; it is still called the Handley Cross Bridge. He had succeeded to the family property in 1838 on the death of his father. He resigned the editorship of *The New Sporting Magazine* in 1836, and after that date lived chiefly in the country, devoting himself to his favourite pursuits of hunting and shooting, but continuing also his literary work.

The house in King's Road, Brighton, where R. S. Surtees died in 1864.

From an old engraving sent by Messrs. Mutton.

Mr. Jorrocks reappeared once again—and not quite so successfully as before—as a country gentleman in "Hillingdon Hall, or The Cockney Squire" (1845). From 1842 Surtees had been living for part of each year at Hoddesdon in Hertfordshire. Both "Handley Cross" and "Hillingdon Hall" were finished there; also, probably, his next book, "The Analysis of the Hunting Field," reprinted from *Bell's Life in London*. These sketches of hunting and hunting characters were intended as a souvenir of the season of 1845–6—"the best hunting season of modern times." Published in November, 1846, by Rudolph Ackermann at the Eclipse Gallery, 191, Regent Street, this volume was gloriously illustrated by the coloured engravings of Henry Alken—the finest pictures of hunting ever produced. A magnificent new edition of this book, with all the original illustrations, appeared in 1903.

Surtees's next work, also reprinted from *Bell's Life in London*, was "Hawbuck Grange, or the Sporting Adventures of Thomas Scott, Esq." (1847), with eight illustrations by "Phiz." It was not so good as his previous stories; but the author was soon to produce his second great creation, "Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour." This inimitable work was secured by Harrison Ainsworth for serial issue in *The New Monthly Magazine* (1849–51). It was not until 1853 that it appeared in book form with John Leech's illustrations, which show his art at its finest point of humour.

Mr. Soapey Sponge is as great a triumph of character drawing as Mr. Jorrocks, but of an entirely different psychology. Snob and shifty sportsman, he may be free from the vulgarities of the worthy grocer, but he lacks Jorrocks's hospitable, generous ways, for Mr. Sponge's "dexterity in getting into people's houses was only equalled by the difficulty of getting him out again." This book has the most sustained interest of all Surtees's stories. Its numerous characters—Lord Scamperdale, Lucy Glitters, the Jawleyfords, the Jozzleburys, Mr. Waffles—are all living creatures. In his amusing account of Mr. Sponge's visit to Jawleyford Court, Surtees successfully challenged Thackeray in the vein of "On Some Country Snobs." "Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour" was one of Theodore Roosevelt's favourite books, as he mentions in a letter to Lord Trevelyan (1906).

Surtees's next two books, "Ask Mamma, or the Richest Commoner in England" (1858), and "Plain or Ringlets" (1860), also suggest some comparison with Thackeray. Both are social satires, and sport is not quite so prominent as in the author's other work. Leech furnished most delightful illustrations for each of these stories. "Plain or Ringlets" describes life at Brighton (where Surtees generally passed part of the winter) at the height of the town's prosperity in the fifties. It was dedicated to the author's son. Surtees had married, in 1841, Elizabeth Jane, daughter and co-heir of Addison Fenwick, of Bishop Wearmouth. She died in 1879. The only son of the marriage, Anthony Surtees, died in 1871, at the age of twenty-three. There were two daughters, the elder, Miss Elizabeth Anne Surtees, died in 1915, and the younger is Eleanor Viscountess Gort, the present owner of Hamsterley Hall.

Surtees was devoted to Hamsterley, and fully realised and carried out his duties as a country gentleman. He was Deputy Lieutenant for the County of Durham, and High Sheriff in 1856, when he entertained the judges and leading members of the Northern Circuit. He was Chairman of the Shotley Bridge Bench of Magistrates, and frequently presided at the meetings of local agricultural societies. He was a fluent and cultivated speaker. Although he thus undertook many manifold occupations as author, sportsman, and prominent country gentleman, his constitution was never robust. For reasons of health he spent the last winters of his life at Brighton, in rooms at Mutton's famous establishment in the King's Road, and there he died on March 16th, 1864, at the age of sixty-one. By a curious coincidence, his

father, his elder brother, his only son, and his wife all died in the month of March also.

Surtees wrote to the end. His last work, "Mr. Facey Romford's Hounds," came out in monthly parts, and the first number was published almost simultaneously with the author's death. John Leech was the illustrator, but he, too, died before the completion of the serial issue, and so it came about that "Phiz" furnished the remaining illustrations—"Immortal Phiz" who had supplied the first pictures for a Surtees book in 1838. Consequently "Mr. Facey Romford's Hounds" contained designs by both Leech and "Phiz" when published in 1865. Surtees's literary powers suffered no declension as his health failed, and his last book is one of his best.

Surtees is an inimitable delineator of some of the most characteristic, if passing, aspects of English life; and as such he is one of the great band—Thackeray, Dickens, Trollope, Lever, Frank Smedley, Cruikshank, "Phiz," Leech, and Charles Keene—who have preserved for all time the life and aspect of those good, solid, comfortable people, who ate and drank freely, rode hard, and had their quivers full, in the first thirty years of the reign of Victoria.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND.

WHAT SOME FAMOUS AUTHORS THINK OF IT.

MISS BEATRICE HARRADEN:

In answer to your letter, "Alice in Wonderland" was always a dear friend of mine, and I used to read and re-read it. I don't remember having any difficulty in understanding its humour. I loved the Mad Hatter with all my heart, and love him still. All the characters seemed so real. They were part of one's everyday life.

Photo by O. E. Hoppé. **Miss Beatrice Harraden.**

BEATRICE HARRADEN.

MISS CICELY HAMILTON:

No, I did not appreciate the "Alice" books till I re-read them as a grown-up. Perhaps my original introduction came too late—I was nine years old when I first opened them, and as I had been reading everything I could lay hands on from the age of three, I had worked through the "fairy-tale" stage into a somewhat realistic frame of mind. When I met "Alice" my passion was the story with an historical setting—largely, I think, because its backing of actual event and proven fact enabled me to believe in it thoroughly. "Alice" was a mild adventure compared to "A Tale of Two Cities," "Westward Ho!" or Henty's "Young Franc-Tireurs"; and any impression she may have made at a first meeting was completely eclipsed a few months later by Scott.

Photo by Lena Connell. **Miss Cicely Hamilton.**

When I think of Scott I know that "Alice" did not count in my fictional development. I never hated lessons because they kept me from the society of the White Knight; I never struggled valiantly with oncoming sleep that I might pore, with the aid of a secret candle, over the doings of the Hatter and the Dormouse. But there were many secret candles for "Woodstock," "Quentin Durward" and "Kenilworth"; many fruitless, bitter longings for the company of Locksley or Nigel.

Also—a detail—I remember an extreme dislike of a picture of Alice with an elongated neck. I still have an old, instinctive aversion from drawings where features and limbs are exaggerated—caricatures with monstrous heads or huge feet—but, as a child, the dislike had a shudder in it. So at least one episode in Alice's career roused antipathy rather than amusement.

CICELY HAMILTON.

MR. E. F. BENSON:

In answer to your questions I am happy to tell you that of course I was brought up on "Alice." I did not know you could be brought up on anything else.

But when you ask me whether I had any difficulty in understanding its humour, you amaze me. The whole point of "Alice" is that no one, child or adult, can possibly understand a word of it, because it doesn't mean anything. This is the secret of its unique merit.

No threat of a coherent idea ever menaces your bliss, you feel yourself safe from receiving sense on the sly. . . . And above all there is no speck of the revolting sentimentality which too often poisons a child's

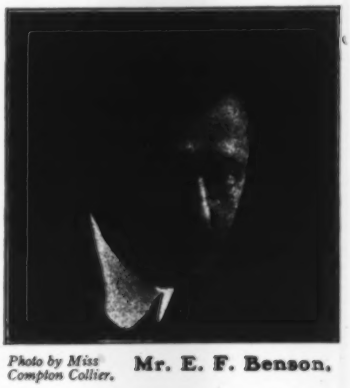


Photo by Miss Compton Collier. **Mr. E. F. Benson.**

mind. . . . You live at the bottom of a well (well in) and eat treacle, and so are very unwell. That is all.

E. F. BENSON.

MR. DION CLAYTON CALTHROP:

"Alice in Wonderland" is in a class by itself. I have always loved it and read it quite regularly. I always feel that it is just a story told by a child to children in the happy-go-lucky, dramatic, what happens next excitement that appeals to everybody; and I have always wanted to write an introduction to the book, but I am afraid it would be as long as the book itself.

Photo by H. Walter Barnett. **Mr. Dion Clayton Calthrop.**

DION CLAYTON CALTHROP.

MRS. MARGARET BAILLIE-SAUNDERS:

I remember "Alice in Wonderland" from the age of four, in the shape of a much-thumbed nursery copy, the common property of a family of six of us—as such it is practically indistinguishable from childhood itself. But even now I am not sure that it was not Tenniel's inimitable illustrations which made its charm, rather than the letterpress. There is a mystic spell about the picture of the sheep who kept the village shop, for instance, which has power to thrill one still; and the stretch of coastline behind the Walrus and the Carpenter, and the immortal Mad Hatter's tea-party are as real as things that happened to oneself. But the story, except where it now and then breaks into frank narrative, seemed confused and irritating to the mind of seven-years-old, and I quite well remember relegating it to a mental pigeon-hole along with "Water Babies" and "The Hunting of The Snark," as being one of those rather fraudulent books which grown-ups basely read to one another and chuckled over with insulting mysteriousness. (I have since learnt why!)

Photo by Elliott & Fry. **Mrs. Baillie-Saunders.**

My earliest love was given to "Grimm's Fairy Tales," and then to Hans Christian Andersen. These two take romance seriously, and most children are romantic rather than humorous—otherwise they would hardly be children.

MARGARET BAILLIE-SAUNDERS.

MISS EVELYN SHARP:

"Alice in Wonderland" did not appeal to me at all when I was a child. I thought it unnatural and rather silly, and doubt if I ever read to the end until I was about sixteen, when I suddenly discovered it and read and re-read it with the utmost pleasure. It is fair to add, perhaps, that as a child I disliked dream stories and stories about dressed-up animals that masqueraded as human beings, though I delighted in genuine fairy stories and tales about real animals. I do not believe I discovered any humour in "Alice" until I was older, and all the people in it seemed to me invented rather than imagined and therefore unreal. And I detested the pictures.

Photo by Russell. **Miss Evelyn Sharp.**

EVELYN SHARP.

MADAME SARAH GRAND:

"Alice in Wonderland" was my delight in my youth, and still is. I certainly have always appreciated the humour of it. I remember thinking the verses exquisitely "funny" the first time I read them, and I soon knew the whole book by heart. My attitude as a child in regard to fairy tales in general was that grown-up people knew that they were not true and I knew that they were, and we were both right.

Photo by Russell. **Madame Sarah Grand.**

SARAH GRAND.

MR. W. B. MAXWELL:

"Alice in Wonderland" was among the greatest delights of my childhood, and I can remember as though it was yesterday the exquisite pleasure with which I first read those magic pages. I revelled in their humour, although I cannot pretend to say whether I fully understood it. The book impressed me as a marvellous *communication* to one's childish mind. It seemed to be different from all other books, and closer to me than any of them; it seemed to me perfect and final; containing all that a child wanted to be said, could not say itself, but had always believed might be said.

W. B. MAXWELL.

SHAKESPEARE AND HIS CHARACTERS.*

By George Saintsbury.

THAT the abundance of books about Shakespeare is at once a consequence and a proof of that "universality" of his—the discovery or at least the formulation of which puts Dryden at the head of all his positive critics as Arnold's sonnet puts *him* at the head of all critics by a kind of negation—is undoubtedly a banal truism. But banal truisms have a rather uncanny habit of keeping valuable truths stowed somehow about their persons. One such in this case is that while some books tell us nothing at all, it is almost impossible for a book on Shakespeare not to add to our knowledge if not of Shakespeare, of mankind. If it only tells us that the author is a donkey it tells us at the same time what kind of a donkey he is; it classifies him in genus and species of asininity as nothing else can do. And as neither of the books before us confines itself to this rather deplorable revelation of zoopsychology, others besides cynics may find profit and pleasure in turning them over.

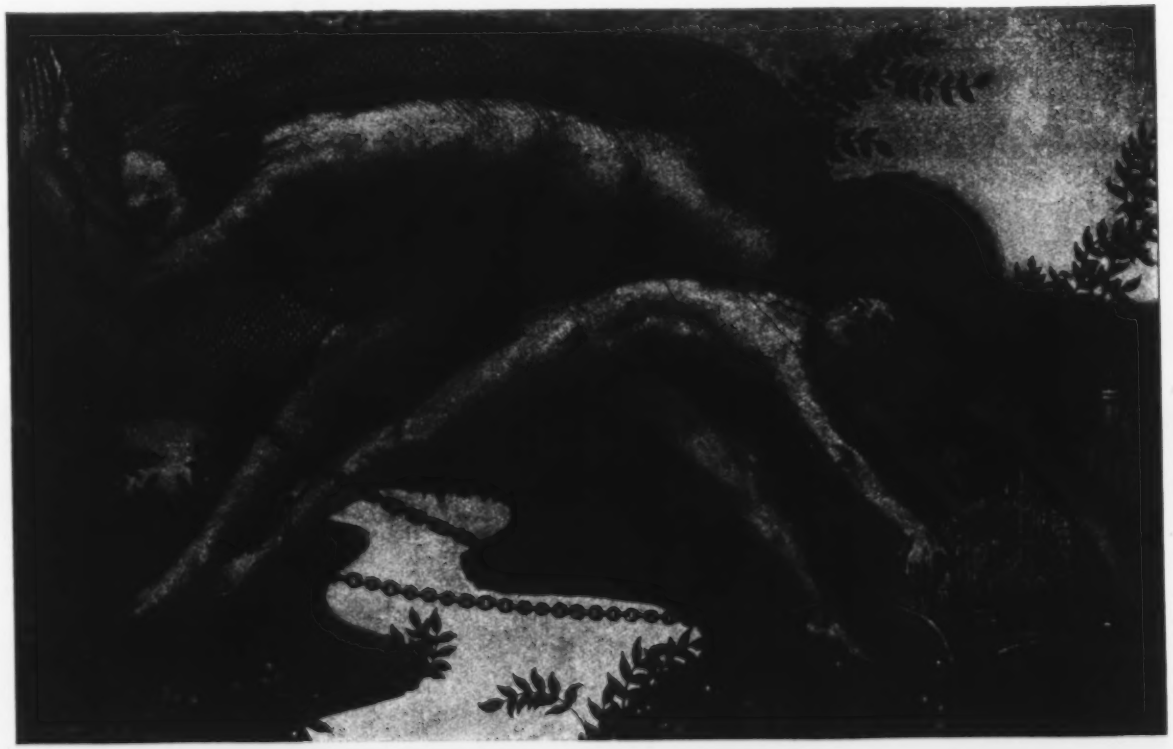
To begin with Mr. Mathew, there is in his book a great deal of common sense; and this, though it might seem to be faint praise in regard to some books, is notoriously by no means faint as regards books about Shakespeare. Of course one may differ with him; if one did not differ with the author of a book on Shakespeare that author would be oneself or Diabolus. But Mr. Mathew has one guide-rope to which whosoever clings he can hardly go hopelessly wrong. This is the belief that the passion for patching and parcelling out not merely whole plays but separate passages between half a dozen different authors, is one of the fondest things ever vainly invented; that at any rate the great bulk of the "Shakespeare" that we have between two covers is the work of the same man, though it may, or rather must, have been written at different times of the same life. And he is sound on "Titus Andronicus"—a very good touchstone. Perhaps he is unduly sceptical on some points, as where he says that we do not know how Marlowe was killed. The present reviewer has been not seldom rebuked for requiring too strictly legal evidence as to the lives of Shakespeare and his fellows. And he would say that the manner of Marlowe's death is as well attested as anything short of positive legal evidence can attest. But as the worst faults of average Shakespearean criticism come from an absence of wholesome scepticism (Bacon-worship and such-like things come from excess of credulity), one need not grumble much. The least admirable thing one has noticed in the book is something like a revival of the old Jonson-baiting. Infallible (because purely literary) evidence tells us that Shakespeare and Jonson exhibit immense differences of literary kind; that there was any "difference" of a disagreeable sort in the other sense rests on nothing but arbitrary interpretation of gossip and sheer "hariolation" of guesswork about possible meaning of passages. How far the "image of Shakespeare" which Mr. Mathew has conjured up for himself with the help of a careful survey of the plays and at least a competent study of their more recent commentators, will please others, it is impossible to say. That it should *satisfy* any others who are worth satisfying is, as implied above, still more impossible. Everybody who deserves to have a book about Shakespeare at all has and is his own book on that subject. But at any rate it is not a book which one's own would be inclined to kick out of the shelf if they were placed side by side.

Professor Schücking's dissertation requires a somewhat different mode of criticism. He has already "passed" in Shakespearean commentatorship, and thus is a qualified candidate for honours in it. Whether this book attains them, and of what class they are remains to be decided. The particular division of the general subject which he has chosen is perhaps the most dangerous, if not exactly the most difficult, of all; because it is the most subject to that unique combination of poetic universality and critical individualism which has been mentioned above. An Aristotelian *phronimos* or "sensible man" can put away all the chatter about the personality of Shakespeare by remembering that for him Shakespeare is the person who wrote "Shakespeare"; all that about the order of the plays by remembering that it doesn't really matter much, and so on. But when you come to the characters, the case is altered. If not as much as the poetry, it is and must be to any fit reader a case of personal appeal. Very rarely has any man a friend whose character interests him as much as Hamlet's or Prospero's, Antony's or Macbeth's; rarely, though somewhat oftener, a love whose character attracts him (she needn't, as Mr. Pope would say, have much character at all) as that of Lady Macbeth or Rosalind, of Juliet or Cleopatra does. So with discussions in this kind we get into the region of thumb-biting; and hand goes frequently to sword.

Professor Schücking tells us a good deal about himself by starting or almost starting with a defence of Rümelin. It is true that that clever but perverse heretic did not busy himself much with heresy on the character side. But both he and his disciple (or at least apologist) show themselves by far at their best when they are demolishing the structures of others and not attempting anything positive even in the way of demolishing Shakespeare himself. Rümelin was not bad on Gervinus; Professor Schücking is not bad on a great many more recent commentators, German of course chiefly but also English to a considerable extent. But after all this is business which is not very well worth doing. To begin with there is no end to it; the old jibe about "fleas having other fleas to bite 'em" recurs. Besides, every one ought to have brains and taste enough to do this for himself. If you cannot add something of your own you should hold your peace.

Now Professor Schücking does add something—indeed a good deal of his own, and it is sometimes valuable. But sometimes also one fears that it is open

"An Image of Shakespeare." By Frank Mathew. (Jonathan Cape.)—"Character Problems in Shakespeare's Plays." By Leven L. Schücking. (Harrap.)



From a Painting by JOHN HANCOCK.

THE LEASH-HOLDER.

From a Drawing by JOHN HANCOCK.

THE TEARS OF THE MOTHERS.

to that next stage of "biting." He is, as one expects a person of his nationality to be, much too fond of general propositions. For instance here is one italicised in the original: "*The first mention in the drama of things that are important for the action or the characterisation of the central figure must never be allowed, in the interest of the characterisation of secondary figures, to distort the representation of the facts.*" If this were said to us we should perhaps borrow from Shakespeare himself the reply "Anan?" and not be much helped by the gloss that "he had a tendency to episodic intensification."

However, a book on the characters of Shakespeare offers itself, with unusual frankness on its own side and fairness on that of the critic, to judgment by the tree-and-fruits test. And perhaps there is no better, though it may be admitted that there are easier tests of this kind than the consideration of what is said about Cleopatra and Miranda; for they are probably the two poles of Shakespeare's woman-world and both are perfectly drawn. So opposite are they—and opposite in ways sometimes so subtle and easily mistaken—that anyone but a real critic might easily fail on *one*. But a failure on both must be rather fatal. And one fears that Professor Schücking does fail on both. That he sees "vulgarity" in the Cleopatra of the first three acts is almost fatal of itself. For he is the last person not to admit—indeed he is constantly urging—that you must never judge Shakespeare merely by modern habits of speech and action. And only by these (and a rather shallow use of these) can even a shadow of vulgarity be thrown on the serpent of old Nile. And this, fatal as it is, is made more so by the fact that he admires the Cleopatra of the last two acts almost as much as she deserves, and only finds fault with her because she does not hang closely enough to her earlier self. Now though no man is permitted to understand women completely, any man who sees inconsistency here must give up all hope of the most distant appreciation of them.

Still, let us grant that while Cleopatra, as she is the most glorious, is the most complex of Shakespeare's women, there is at least no *apparent* complexity in Miranda. But the absence of apparent complexity, especially in a woman, should only warn the wise against hasty judgment. Dr. Schücking has not heard the warning. He admits that Prospero's daughter "holds a distinctive place" among Shakespeare's characters. But he thinks she has "fewer characteristic traits than any other"; thinks her remarkably "sketchy," and even as a child of Nature puts Perdita above her—Perdita, who is really a sketch though a lovely one, and a mouthpiece for exquisitely decorative poetry. He is "somewhat astonished" to find her talking of her grandmother's womb. One really does not know in reference to which of these estimates to be more sorry for Professor Schücking. A man to whom Cleopatra is vulgar and Miranda not clean-mouthed enough deserves the profoundest pity.

A TWENTIETH CENTURY GENIUS.

BY R. L. MÉGROZ.

EXCEPT for the word "genius" the title of this essay is to be understood ironically, for the subject is John Hancock, artist, poet and prophet, who drowned himself in the London Regent's Canal when he was but twenty two, in November, 1918, at the close of the Great War. During the last three years of his life, that is to say during three years of war, he produced in pictorial work alone what appears to be the fruit of an inspired lifetime. He left behind him, besides wonderful pictures in black-and-white and water-colour, a mass of literary manuscripts which have been lent to me by his parents for study at my leisure. The literary work does not attain the high technical level of the pictures, but as the creator of both literary and pictorial work, John Hancock becomes one of the most remarkable among the many remarkable figures in the annals of art. As a mystic artist in line and colour he must, I think, rank with William Blake. To compensate for a short life and consequently smaller output, John Hancock displays a similarly immense intellectual horizon with a greater versatility and a coherence that is lacking in Blake's most ambitious work. Characteristic of Hancock's mature paintings is found the graceful and sweeping power of Blake, the rich tenderness of Blake's colour, and a highly symbolic method of presentment, although the symbolism is distinctly Hancock's in detail. Also there is in these pictures of the younger artist a definiteness of conception, a coherence of perspective intellectual as well as pictorial, often absent in Blake's work. Definiteness allied to mysticism, coherence allied to prophecy, is a possession of this age which is the legacy left from the moil of many past ages. There was, too, with Blake the visionary, always something of the "let's be quick, while God the Father isn't looking!"—a kind of—dare we say?—infantile complex which pursued his tremendous visions. Not the least amazing feature of John Hancock's later pictures is the masterly and classic calm, a maturity in which exquisite colour and form co-operate with rather than subserve the symbolism of an artist who was also a mystic philosopher.

The black-and-white drawing, "The Tears of the Mothers," reproduced in these pages, was one of many designs made by Hancock while a student at the St. John's Wood Art School. It precedes the intensive and mature period of his mystical work from the age of nineteen until his death at twenty-two; but even during the last phase Hancock remained versatile. Book-plates, two interesting specimens of which are also reproduced here, calendars, water-colours revealing a thoughtless joy in colour, light and movement, and some delightful studies in the Japanese manner, which at the St. John's Wood Art School were dubbed "Japancocks," reveal the artist in a diversity of moods. Where his work is deliberately light, as in the illustrations to Margaret L. Wood's fairy story, "Come Unto these Yellow Sands," it is full of Puck-like humour and dainty grace. Hancock showed an increasing interest

Book-plate.

From a drawing by John Hancock.

in contemporary literature as he developed. G. K. Chesterton aroused his enthusiasm, and John Drinkwater's play, "X = O," inspired one of his finest water-colours in the mature period of his work—a significant fact.

"The Leash-Holder," which appears here in line, is a water-colour done at the time of the mature mystical work, and is the property of Mr. F. C. Fenton, who was a college friend of Hancock. It is not so much mystical, although intensely symbolical, as poetic, and affords another hint of Hancock's literary tendency. In it is involved an idea frequently occurring in the artist's individual intuitive philosophy, the necessity of treading a solitary path of individual self-communion in order to progress towards "the first of the God states." Father and son are shown chained together, the father's soul awake (in the form of a serpent), the son's soul still asleep. The father sees the path of his own progress but has not realised the son's necessity to descend into the city and learn truth by contact with appearances. We see them therefore vainly striving one against the other. In the picture there is a kind of stark half-light and Hancock has restrained his love of rich colour so that all the tones are subdued. The picture is interesting for our present purpose because the same subject is treated by Hancock in a story which adds to the subject a sardonic humour and the human intimacy of dialogue. The picture, like all Hancock's symbolic work, is austere in generalisation and the exclusion of detail not strictly essential.

If we approach thus the literary expression of Hancock's genius *via* the pictorial work, we shall have to realise constantly that this painter is one of the prophets. Although a master of the decorative in art, it was the prophet, and the twentieth century prophet, in him that wrote: "The means may be beautiful, but the end is more beautiful still." He saw art as in its infancy, "the soulless production of the great technical masters of the past, executed at the command of the Church or some other society," and not the "outburst into reality of prophetic visions, philosophical knowledge and reasonings" which he aspired to. The contents of our art quarterlies often incline to a sighful acquiescence! Faith and visionary thought are the dominant qualities in Hancock's art, pictorial and literary, and these are the qualities most needed to-day by poets and painters. How else are we to approach Blake's vision of a people obeying not the priests of institutions but the poets of the new Sinai, whence shall be uttered God's "thunders of thought"? The value and justification of "idea" or "purpose" in a work of art is still a theme of controversy among critics, and on that account the accomplishment of Hancock has an especial significance.

When Hancock was not drawing or painting with his left hand, with his right (this is literal truth) he was pouring the overflow of creative energy into the broad river-bed of language. The essential nature of this literary work is explained as clearly as possible by himself in one of numerous diary jottings: "There are so many stray cobwebby fibres of thought that drift around everything which is concrete enough to become a picture and which are so quickly lost or forgotten if you cannot chain them in place." Hancock's writings therefore are generally preoccupied with the newly-born ideas emerging from the mystical philosophy which gradually found expression in the pictures. The literary work is often epigrammatic. On a calendar made for his mother he will write:

> "Behold! the barren earth!
> Behold! Flowers of Spring!
> Behold the sweet rebirth!
> 'I' all symbols sing."

On a picture (like Blake he often inscribed on his mystical pictures an explanatory text) he will inscribe:

> "All symbols that thou here dost see
> Are God-paths to futurity"—

or:

> "Death is the pulse-beat of the evolutions."

Hancock wrote a series of strange allegorical stories, each from three to six thousand words long, in which the mystical philosophy of the main body of his pictures finds expression in the human parable. "Human" is perhaps hardly applicable to more than a very few, but these stories follow an immense arc of thought and constitute an intensely interesting literary phenomenon, for they are obviously the work of a genius. The language in comparison with modern literary deftness

Book-plate.

From a drawing by John Hancock.

is unsophisticated and at times a little unwieldy, but nearly always the story is borne along by a sensitive and satisfying rhythm. What Hancock noted of Walter Pater's style, which influenced him deeply, is not inapplicable to his own prose: "It is full not only of its actual significance but of a strange texture, a feeling of colour, a suggestion of form even further than is conveyed by the sequence of the words themselves, which is partly the secret of his charm." Hancock cannot of course be set beside Pater as a literary artist, and if "the sequence of the words themselves" often has charm, the paucity of range in their selection was a weakness due to Hancock's insufficient training. With regard to "a feeling of colour," it was natural that so superb a painter saw the ideas which he put into language often glowing with the colour and sharply shaping themselves into the definite outlines belonging to a picture. One of his stories opens: "The night was heavy purple, the moon was like hammered bronze. The whole world was heavy purple save for the two moons of hammered bronze."

John Hancock.

More characteristic of the prose and verse, however, is a preoccupation with ideas of the eternity of change through which all forms of life must pass. Sometimes, as in a story called "In and Out of Curio Shops," he illustrates with unusual imaginative perception a definite moment of revelation experienced by an individual, in this case a sensitive boy. Or, as in "Incarnations Nine," a generalised philosophy of transmigration is suggested. One of the last stories, entitled "The Onleaner," is a vision of the "City of To-morrow." It was a dream. "There is no City of the Vision of To-morrow," says Hancock, "the To-morrow is the Selfhood where the Body and the Mind are subordinate parts in the Trinity of the Soul. Everything that I had seen was a materialisation necessitated by my material incompleteness of vision and understanding. There are no towering bridges, passages tiring to traverse, great palaces, for in reality all these are within the child. His body is Beauty, as his mind is Truth and his soul God, and he, the child, is the sum of all these, the Holy Ghost of the Selfhood of To-morrow."

It is with exultation that I hear at the moment of writing that a publisher has been found who is at once enterprising and sane enough to undertake the publication of a memorial volume containing poems, essays, allegorical stories, and reproductions of some of the finest of Hancock's pictures, together with a memoir by Mr. Dyfed Parry, who was a friend of the artist. But of course the publisher is Irish—he is Daniel O'Connor. To him be praise!

NIETZSCHE AND WAGNER.*

BY GERALD CUMBERLAND.

TO the young and inexperienced it is harrowing to discover gradually, month after month, that men of towering genius whose work is full of gold were, after all, only human in their daily lives and, in many instances, were peculiarly frail in their humanity. For thirty years all the world has known that between Richard Wagner and Friedrich Nietzsche there existed for a considerable period an ardent friendship inspired, we were all led to suppose, by a close identity of ideals, and broken by a betrayal, on Wagner's part, of the spiritual compact that bound the two men together. Nietzsche genuinely believed—and he had some reason for his belief—that in "Parsifal" Wagner pretended to be giving to the world a presentation of his own spiritual experience, hoping thereby to placate the Christian rulers of Germany and in that way establish firmly the trembling foundations of the Bayreuth undertaking. "It is impossible for me," wrote Nietzsche, "to recognise *greatness* which is not united with candour and sincerity towards one's self." As Wagner had always been an avowed atheist, Nietzsche found it impossible to believe in the sincerity of this new religious development which so unfortunately promised to further the composer's material interests. So the very core of their friendship was poisoned and corroded: Nietzsche, who hitherto had proudly championed Wagner's cause, now became one of his most hostile and eloquent critics.

But anyone who reads this absorbing book of letters between the two men, and who studies the real facts and sincere comments supplied by Frau Foerster-Nietzsche, the philosopher's sister, will quickly divine that the real cause of the destruction of their friendship lay much deeper than that which for so long has been

* "The Nietzsche-Wagner Correspondence." Edited by Frau Foerster-Nietzsche. 21s. (Duckworth.)

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generally accepted. Nietzsche himself recognised something of this years afterwards when he wrote: "We were too essentially different in our inmost natures, and this was *bound* to cause a separation, sooner or later." We who read this book can detect in the very beginning of that friendship the seeds of its decay and death.

At their first meeting Nietzsche was twenty-five, Wagner thirty years older. From the very outset, Wagner, always anxious to gain adherents to his artistic doctrines, was touched and flattered by Nietzsche's enthusiastic appreciation, and forthwith began to "use" this fresh and brilliant disciple. Wagner, like all the great world-figures in history, had a devastating effect on many lives; few who came within his orbit escaped without a wound or a burn. His very vitality was disintegrating; the sacrifices he demanded from those who loved him and his work had no limit; from him a request was a command, a hint a request. To know Wagner intimately was to serve him: he would permit no other relationship. Even the money and the prestige of King Ludwig II were at his service. To such a man as Nietzsche was in his twenties, Wagner was a psychological necessity, for there was nothing the young professor "desired more passionately than to find some being whom he could revere." At the beginning of their friendship, he revered Wagner both as man and artist; but he did so only by wilfully (but we can guess how painfully!) closing his eyes to Wagner's ineradicable and masterful selfishness, to the streak of real vulgarity in him, and to the almost insane suspiciousness of which Nietzsche was so often a victim.

Wagner was living in social and semi-political exile at Tribschen with Cosima, the daughter of Liszt, and the undivorced wife of von Bülow, the eminent musician and Wagnerite. In three years Nietzsche paid them twenty-three visits, mostly from Basle, at whose university he was professor of philology. During those years the younger man was almost incredibly loyal to the older; moreover, he gave royally both time and thought not only to furthering Wagner's artistic interests, but to a multitude of small matters that could have been undertaken by almost anyone. Wagner was unsparing in his demands, but Nietzsche gave no sign, and probably felt no moment, of irritation. It is abundantly clear that Wagner regarded his young friend solely as a fighter in the Wagnerian cause. When Nietzsche wrote the first volume of what his sister calls "his big Greek dissertation," Wagner showed both disappointment and annoyance that it was not in some way a glorification of his own art. The great intellect of the young professor, it is clear, was not to be allowed to develop naturally from within. When Nietzsche was invited to spend his summer vacation at Tribschen and found himself unable to go, Wagner sulked, became arrogant and showed his teeth. There is no doubt that if, by destroying Nietzsche's soul, Wagner could have helped on his own cause, he would not for one moment have hesitated to sacrifice that vigorous intellect that was only second to his own. Curiously enough, Nietzsche himself believed that "a great military leader has the right to sacrifice his fellow-men, if, by so doing, he can achieve the highest aims—in fact, he conceived this to be the positive duty of generals, no less than of the intellectual leaders of humanity, and of all the great inventors, in the successful prosecution of their plans." More curious still, some three and a half years after the friendship of the two men began, Nietzsche was ready to throw up his professional career, ring what would seem to him the death-knell of his own work, and devote himself to a lecture tour throughout Germany in order to disseminate the principles of Wagnerism. Fortunately, circumstances occurred to interfere with that great sacrifice being made. Little by little, as Nietzsche's intellect developed and came nearer to maturity, he began to free himself from Wagner's strangle-hold. The accidental meeting of the two men at Sorrento and the discussion there of the "Parsifal" scheme was but the closing scene of a long, slow tragedy in which the pride of two great men was deeply wounded time after time. That Nietzsche suffered more than Wagner there is no doubt, for he had the nobler mind.

It is said that Richard Strauss once declared he considered the years in which the friendship between Wagner and Nietzsche was at its zenith, "one of the most impressive and significant cultural moments of the nineteenth century." Some of us in England are inclined to agree with this view, in spite of the present strong movement against Wagner and the temporary post-war eclipse of Nietzsche; but whether we agree with it or not, none of us can afford to ignore a book that, as this does, sheds so great an illumination on the psychology of two of the most overwhelming forces of their time. Frau Foerster-Nietzsche does much more than give the two men's correspondence; she herself was a spectator of the tragedy and, as a loyal sister and as an intelligent witness, she has much to say that is of value. The book, apparently, was published in Germany eight years ago. The present translation, though on the whole precise and accurate, is not invariably so; moreover, a few American locutions are irritating, and the proofs have not been corrected with the care that the value of the matter deserves.

HUMOUR IN ART.

By A. St. John Adcock.

IT is a common complaint and truer than most complaints, that nothing is so often undervalued, in art even more than in social life, as the quality of humour. In the world of affairs, gravity passes as a gentlemanly passion and humour as its poor relation, to be invited to dinner because it is so amusing, but not to be tolerated when the time has come for doing something that looks important. Nobody stands on ceremony with it; it is so graciously human; therefore most of us like but do not altogether respect it, and pay a readier homage to solemn virtues we can no more take to our hearts than we could

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. Frank Reynolds.**

fraternise with the statue of Peel at the top of Cheapside and slap it on the back. Paint landscapes, portraits, historical pieces, pathetic, pretty or any sort of serious pictures—write tragedies, stories of sorrow or sentiment—and you may wear laurels with a sufficient seemliness, but you can't do that if you draw or write things that make people laugh. Humour is the Cinderella of the Arts, too homely and unassuming to be allowed to go to the party with her showier sisters, and if she gets there at last, later in the evening, it is by a miracle. Mrs. Oliphant uttered a general feeling when she lamented that before Hogarth's pictures "the vulgar laugh," and added, "never a tear comes at Hogarth's call. It is his sentence of everlasting expulsion from the highest heaven of Art."

Now I am one of the Philistines who believe there is no heaven of art too high for the humorist to reach: who rank Hogarth with Joshua Reynolds as a painter of portraits, and above him as an imaginative and creative artist. Moreover, Lamb taught me to see things of terrible poignance, things for tears, in those paintings of Hogarth's. The humorous artist is not less gifted than the artist who has no humour; he may be as great and sometimes greater, in his different way. And the humorous artist has to pass a more drastic and infallible test than is required of the artist who is humourless. If the latter really cannot paint he has only to call his crude or eccentric daubs a new art and give it a new name to win disciples who, taking pride to themselves in a taste that is not shared by the vulgar, will laud him into temporary prosperity. But your humorous artist cannot resort to this expedient. Success with the normal, intelligent multitude is his test of capacity. If he can exercise the technique of his art as efficiently as any man who ever lived yet cannot amuse, cannot make people laugh, he is a failure, and no pose, no subterfuge, enables him to get away from the fact.

Here are books on my table containing work by five living artists in humour who have passed that test triumphantly, and for me, at all events, there is in much of this work a wider knowledge of humanity, a subtler, more varied portrayal of character, richer imaginative and creative faculty than I have usually found shrined in gold frames on the dignified walls of an Academy exhibition.

Take this big book of Frank Reynolds's "*Punch* Pictures."[1] We are so used now to seeing him every week in *Punch*, where he has succeeded Townsend as Art Editor, that we have come rather to take him for granted. He amuses us; but we expected him to and knew that he would. If daybreak did not happen regularly every morning we should not take it as casually as we take our breakfasts; we should watch for it and, giving it more than a familiar glance when it did come, we should recognise its continual freshness and variety and the wonder of it. You might look at these drawings and praise them for nothing but their skill in draughtsmanship, but a good deal more than that has gone to the making of them. They are studies in character; they tell you as much about a man or a woman in a few lines as a psychological novelist could tell you in as many pages. They are short stories; they are dramas in little and, as often as not, the line of dialogue underneath is not needed to explain their meaning, though it condenses and accentuates the humour of them. The four sketches of a stage rehearsal where a large, stout queen has to faint and be caught by one of her soldiers and, for catastrophic reasons, the author has to revise the directions and have her caught by four of them, speaks for itself. So does that picture of the spacious mother leaning in her doorway, a very small boy standing alongside, while the scraggy, genial curate looks down on him, and the mother explains, "There's no 'olding 'im now, sir, since 'e's gone into knickers—'e's that pomptious!"

As Mr. E. V. Lucas says, Mr. Reynolds's happy hunting-ground seems to be "somewhere on the outskirts of London where City clerks with families have their homes"; but he is as much at home in the slums, or among the new rich, or in all manner of Bohemian circles. And there is never malice or bitterness in Reynolds's laughter. His hits at our social vanities and vices, foibles and follies are as good-natured as they are shrewd; he is effective because he has got life properly focused—his vision is true. If we looked closer into them, half the things that anger would amuse us. We are forgetting now the fierce, the scathing pictures made of our late enemies during the war, but we still remember Reynolds's ludicrous "Study of a Prussian Household having its Morning Hate," and it is a joy to look at it again. After all, what is the difference between the pride and arrogance of adults who have acquired more than their neighbours, and the behaviour of Reynolds's urchin "pomptious" in his first breeches? These things, and our hate and scorn of each other, may or may not be reprehensible but, considering what we all are, and for how short a time we are that, they are undoubtedly silly, and the man who can show us their absurdity is helping us to grow wiser.

There is less geniality in George Belcher, but the same truth of vision. He goes largely to low life for his scenes and characters and handles them with a graphic, almost Hogarthian realism. The wonderful study from life, in his "Characters,"[2] of

Photo by Lassalle. **Mr. George Belcher.**

[1] "'Punch' Pictures by Frank Reynolds." With Introduction by E. V. Lucas. 10s. 6d. (Cassell.)

[2] "Characters." By George Belcher. With Introduction by Frank Swinnerton. 7s. 6d. (Methuen.)

Mrs. Harris of Jollop Yard, with the minute detail of the streets in the background, is as starkly realistic as anything of Hogarth's—more so than he sometimes was, for there is not a touch of caricature or exaggeration about it. Her flabby features, her bonnet, her bag, the elaborate pattern on her shawl, her expansive apron—Mr. Belcher has simply conjured her out of actuality on to his paper exactly in her habit and manner as she lives. Even when the jest under his picture is a little feeble, the strength and power of suggestion in the picture itself makes atonement for that. If Reynolds is in art what Barrie is in literature, Belcher has affinities with Shaw and Pinero. He has not old Izaak's way of putting the worm on the hook as if he loved it, but he catches your laughter, though he does so more often with irony and satire than with gentler humours. "It is not in the actual jokes," writes Mr. Swinnerton, "that the excellence of the present collection lies. What Mr. Belcher needs is an occasion for the showing of two human beings in conversation. Give him that, and the story arises naturally. Granted an interchange of appropriate remarks, these two living creatures are so accurately seen that they can be rendered with an air (it is only an air) of inattentiveness and with that added lustre of peculiarity which comes from the artist's wit and his sense of the grotesque in nature. It is a twist, an emphasis, that makes the people in the drawings start out as 'characters.' They are not drawn flat or finite; they hardly ever fail to suggest all sorts of thoughts and suppositions and humorous notions which certainly are not supplied by the printed words beneath the drawings. It is as if, in opening this book, we found the world transfigured—repeopled with comic characters that we have unconsciously known all our lives, as we know the comic characters in literature."

Photo by Swaine. **Mr. H. M. Bateman.**

With H. M. Bateman[3] you are, most of the time, in an altogether different world. He is frankly a caricaturist; he is not concerned with what a man can see of himself in the looking-glass, but illustrates the human spirit in grotesque allegorical shapes that represent the man's thoughts, feelings, passions, the essential individuality that is hidden from us by the orthodox face and figure of the visible person. There are people who dislike Mr. Bateman's work intensely; its lack of beauty, its exaggerations; but there are more who delight with enthusiasm in its truth, not to appearances but to the inner life that appearances obscure. I confess myself one of this multitude, and fearful of my own capacity to do justice to him, I asked Mr. Bateman the other day to explain himself to me. Being a modest man he did not do this so thoroughly as I had hoped. "I have done humorous drawings ever since I can remember," he said, "but realising early that in order to express oneself truly in any branch of art a proper term of study is essential I worked hard in the art schools and studios for about five years, drawing and painting from life as seriously as possible—in my case the time was well spent, for I consider that caricature is the quintessence of expressive draughtsmanship and must have for a basis a knowledge of true form. I find it necessary to get back to nature from time to time, when I study from life in some shape, and so renew the springs. I hear on all sides that I have been influenced by Caran d'Ache, and have no doubt there is much truth in this, for I am a great admirer of his work and could not wish for a better influence—but when my particular style was developing I was always being influenced by different men's work, though I believe that if their work and mine were placed together now there would be little enough in the way of resemblance. It is often said that caricature is not understood or appreciated in this country, but this appears to me to be due to the fact that there is very little true caricature produced here to be studied. For the few caricaturists we have had there has been a very wide and full appreciation." That is unquestionable. It is so in the case of Mr. Bateman himself; and in the case of our chief of living caricaturists, Mr. Max Beerbohm.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. George Morrow.**

If I were writing of George Morrow's drawings in *Punch*, or of those collections of some of his best work in "George Morrow: His Book" and "More Morrow," I should have more to say of him than I have space to say it in. But I am only concerned with him, at the moment, as an illustrator of two new books, "You Know What People Are," by E. V. Lucas,[4] and "Tinker, Tailor," by A. P. Herbert.[5] None of our artist-humorists is quainter or more whimsical, and at the same time, as Mr. Lucas once said of him, "he is one of the most adequate draughtsmen that we have. No one can better suggest atmosphere, whether indoors or out, and some of his landscapes and seascapes are perfect." If Mr. Lucas had illustrated these essays of his with his own hand the quiet humour and fantasy of them could not be more intimately interpreted than they are in Mr. Morrow's delightful sketches; and there is the same complete harmony between Mr. Herbert's droll, freakish, gaily tripping verses, offered as "A Child's Guide to the Professions," and Mr. Morrow's realisation of them. I like especially Morrow's "Sailor," both where he is dancing on the beach and taking his beer on the jetty; his "Farmer," and the Squire and those guests who, after church, are taken by the Squire round his estate, his stables, flowers, incinerator, pigs and the rest:

"They run and climb and leap and crawl
Across a ditch, across a wall,
A brook, a bog, a waterfall,
Across a mile of plough;

[3] "More Drawings." By H. M. Bateman. 10s. 6d. (Methuen.)

[4] 5s. (Methuen.)

[5] 3s. 6d. (Methuen.)

And see, as sailors see at last
The gorgeous Orient, aghast—
Majestic, comatose and vast,
The very latest Cow—"

and the verse is the vivider and livelier for having presentments of that bedraggled party breaking it up and plodding through it. Morrow studied drawing in Belfast, where he was born, at South Kensington, and for a while at Paris. In October, 1906, he made his first appearance in *Punch*. "I was influenced (of course)," he told me, "by Caran d'Ache, also by Oberlander and Vogel." He mostly gets his subjects by accident. Trade catalogues, dictionaries and advertisement pages of railway guides, he says, are among his sources of inspiration. Scraps of conversation heard in the streets often suggest ideas to him, usually remote from what he had heard. He has found some of the best humorous line drawings on ancient Greek vases, and thinks it likely that there were very good humorous drawings done by cave dwellers, and though these were obliterated long ago he rather unkindly suggests that the jokes still survive among us.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé.

Mr. G. L. Stampa.

I would like to have another collection from G. L. Stampa such as he gave us in "Ragamuffins"—no artist since Phil May has so sympathetically understood or so cleverly and humorously presented the London street gamin—but this Christmas I have seen nothing of his in the book way except the illustrations he has made to S. Lyle Cummins's three excellent volumes of "Plays for Children."* These little drawings in colour and black-and-white have grace and beauty as well as humour and fantasy. Stampa is another *Punch* artist, and was probably predestined to be one, for I remember his telling me that Mr. Punch was his first drawing-master. "I was brought up—or rather, brought myself up—on *Punch*," said he. "My earliest recollections are of copying for my own pleasure all his great masters—Leech, Keene, Tenniel, Sambourne—till I got steeped in *Punch*. It would not surprise me if I had been influenced by these. Before I was a student (I mean by that, before the time I was supposed to be studying) my first published little sketch was printed in *Punch*, and nothing ever happened before or is ever likely to happen again in my life that could give me the thrill I experienced that week. The sketch was printed about the size of a postage stamp, but I was prouder of it than of anything I have ever done since, and was fully convinced that everybody noticed me that week, and nudged his neighbour as I passed and said, '*He's* got a drawing in *Punch*!' You'll understand I was very young, but I'd give a lot to go through that feeling again." Later, he worked at Hatherley's, and went through the R. A. Schools. Then for a period he worked in oil and painted portraits; but that early upbringing was too strong for him, and he went back to black-and-white, and found his *métier*, and has been found himself by discerning editors and the public. But his disparagement of those portraits he used to paint in oils will not be accepted by anybody who has noted how deftly and revealingly even his hastiest sketches and caricatures of prominent persons catch the likeness and idiosyncrasies of their originals.

One advantage with artists in humour is that you need not fag round the public galleries in order to see their work; you can carry it home in a book and enjoy it by your own fireside, and all I have been trying to do is to express something of the enjoyment I have thus had from the work of five of the many brilliant humorous artists of our day in books that happen to have just come to hand.

* 3 vols. 8s. 6d. each. (Methuen.)

New Books.

HAIL AND FAREWELL.

Like a tree blooming strangely and serenely for a second time under a stormy late sky, Mr. A. E. Housman follows his "A Shropshire Lad" of 1896 with "Last Poems"* in 1922. So securely is the earlier volume lodged in the affections of readers that it is wonderful to think that its recognition was not instant and ample. More than one publisher, it is said, forfeited the privilege of presenting "A Shropshire Lad" to the public, by mere blindness or apathy; more than one reviewer passed its excellence by; and thus it was but slowly that Mr. Housman gained his readers—never, it is safe to assert, to lose them but continually to add to their number. Was it not Coventry Patmore who said of his own collected poems, "I have written little, but it is all my best"? So might Mr. Housman write, and what he has candidly said by way of preface is:

"I publish these poems, few though they are, because it is not likely that I shall ever be impelled to write much more. I can no longer expect to be revisited by the continuous excitement under which in the early months of 1895 I wrote the greater part of my other book, nor indeed could I well sustain it if it came; and it is best that what I have written should be printed while I am here to see it through the press and control its spelling and punctuation. About a quarter of this matter belongs to the April of the present year, but most of it to dates between 1895 and 1910."

He follows this with a lovely refrain—at once induction and farewell:

"We'll to the woods no more,
The laurels are all cut,
The bowers are bare of bay
That once the Muses wore;
The year draws in the day
And soon will evening shut:
The laurels are all cut,
We'll to the woods no more.
Oh we'll no more, no more
To the leafy woods away,
To the high wild woods of laurel
And the bowers of bay no more."

The farewell note is repeated in the last (the forty-first) of the new poems, "Fancy's Knell":

"When lads were home from labour
At Abdon under Clee . . ."

Between the induction and the last poem there is a collection of lyrics so singular and exquisite that almost the only adequate way to recommend them to readers would be to quote shamelessly from every page. Failing that attractive method, it must be said that the new poems do not fall short of the perfection of the old, and that some have a

* "Last Poems." By A. E. Housman. (Grant Richards.)

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melody which might not be found in the first collection. For melody the stanzas just cited may serve as example, and for suggestive power the strange verses entitled "Hell Gate" (from which quotation would be impossibly brutal) are a supreme instance in modern lyrical poetry.

Having said this, all has been said, from one point of view; but much might still be said of the attitude of the author, as declared in "Last Poems." Conversation, which flared up exuberantly on the instant of the book's publication, brought forth the suggestion that there is a somewhat marked parallel between Edward FitzGerald and Mr. A. E. Housman. In the poetry of each there is an attitude of agnostic endurance; in each the endurance is the successor to waste, to:

"The expense of spirit in a waste of shame;"

in each there is defiance as well as endurance; and in each a superb technique to express the sombre philosophy. True that FitzGerald did not invent the substance of his "Omar Khayyám"; but he adapted it and fused it with his peculiar fire. And true too that Mr. Housman speaks dramatically, using a nameless soldier for the purpose of his expression; but his soldier is typical rather than personal, and has no independent life. And there is at least one instance of likeness between the two poets, which is so conspicuous as to be curious; for FitzGerald writes:

"Oh, Thou, who man of baser Earth did'st make,
And who with Eden did'st devise the Snake;
For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man
Is blacken'd, Man's Forgiveness give—and take——"

and Mr. Housman:

"We for a certainty are not the first
Have sat in taverns while the tempest hurled
Their hopeful plans to emptiness, and cursed
Whatever brute and blackguard made the world."

Indeed the whole of this poem (the ninth in the volume) is harmonious with the cry of the earlier agnostic with whom FitzGerald has made us familiar, and

"The troubles of our proud and angry dust"

are the troubles of both poets alike. More explicit yet in its unconscious echo is Mr. Housman's twelfth piece:

"How am I to face the odds
Of man's bedevilment and God's?
I, a stranger and afraid
In a world I never made.
They will be master, right or wrong;
Though both are foolish, both are strong.
And since, my soul, we cannot fly
To Saturn nor to Mercury,
Keep we must, if keep we can,
These foreign laws of God and man."

There is a desperate irony in this acquiescence beyond the touch of any proud or foolish defiance. The attitude is more rigorous than that of "Omar Khayyám," but it is dictated by the same disillusioned or never-illusioned confrontation of the "sorry scheme of things." FitzGerald's technique, his amazing flowering in a new measure, made even this desperate attitude acceptable; and Mr. Housman's command of his medium—so consummate, so accustomed, so tranquil—acts in the same way. Not that there is any chance of the latter writer's position being challenged for a disabling pessimism; *all things to all men* is the common clamour, in a day when one view is hardly preferred to another. Happily Mr. Housman is neither denounced for his philosophy nor ignored for his pure, disengaged poetry; and if there should come a time, within the experience of men now living, when this philosophy itself (like that of our other sombre apostle, Mr. Hardy) is a thing of the dusty past, the pure disengaged poetry of "A Shropshire Lad" and "Last Poems" will yet endure the corruption of time.

The sole link between Mr. Housman and Mr. de la Mare* is this strong link of pure poetry. Poems for children are not likely to be popular if they are philosophic, but the fantasy which stars the present collection and makes it a delight for adults is likely to make it overwhelmingly attractive to children. This large and handsome volume, in fact, should prove the most popular of all gift-books because of the verse, most of which is chosen from books published long since; for the pictures of Miss Lathrop will probably please those only to whom the verse is unfamiliar. She has read the poems eagerly and admiringly, but all too literally, and has conceived it to be her task to make explicit that which the poet leaves implicit; to match precisely, in short, what Mr. de la Mare has given us, with pictures of his pictures. But it is a mistake, nevertheless, which permits her to display a great deal of ingenious skill. It is a beautiful opportunity that is offered by these poems; their simplicities are almost unique, their music unescapable. Sometimes they may seem too sophisticated for children, and the invention too subtle and intellectual; but there is no bound to be set to the comprehension of a child's mind, and what the words fail to convey the music might well suggest. . . . A beautiful opportunity, but small blame to Miss Lathrop if she has attempted an impossibility, for to use the opportunity an artist as rare as the poet is needed. And who can complain if such a lyric as "Mistletoe," so complete and sufficient in its own evocation of a gem-like world, has not found its artist in Miss Lathrop, and still awaits one who can add a superfluity of beauty to the beauty already achieved?

JOHN FREEMAN.

* "Down-Adown-Derry: A book of Fairy Poems." By Walter de la Mare. Illus. by Dorothy P. Lathrop. 15s. (Constable.)

CARUSO.*

This volume is in the common form of such productions—a recital of triumphs, earnings, royal patronage, and so forth. Much of it is interesting, and some of it is authoritative, for Mr. Fucito was for several years Caruso's coach and accompanist; but Caruso deserved something better. He was the finest tenor known to living memory. To say this implies no treason to the operatic hero of the earlier nineties, the magnificent Jean de Reszke, because, in the first place, Jean was not a pure tenor and because, in the next place, he had a range of parts and a personal glamour that Caruso could not equal. Caruso's greatness lay in sheer quality and quantity of voice and in his ability to use it. His vocal art was as fine as the organ it played upon. The present volume names most of his big spectacular parts; but it leaves unmentioned one of his greatest vocal achievements, the singing of Don Ottavio's music in "Don Giovanni." His marvellous breath control, for instance, was never better shown than in the long F and run in "Il mio tesoro," indeed, he was the only tenor of our time who could sing the passage as it is written. The same solo exhibited the wonderful agility of his great voice in florid passages; and his command of the *mezza voce* was more exquisitely exhibited in "Dalla sua pace" than in any other song in his repertory. To have heard Caruso and Destinn together as Raoul and Valentine or Radames and Aïda is a great memory; to have heard them as Don Ottavio and Donna Anna is an exquisite and abiding musical possession.

Caruso had his limitations. The author describes his Don José in "Carmen" as a triumph. It was very far from a triumph in London. He may have got into the part later on or elsewhere; but certainly his first performance of it here was a failure. The music did not suit his voice, and he sang as if he recognised his own deficiency. He had obviously taken pains with the part—indeed, one never had from Caruso the insolence of indifference that audiences sometimes experience from artists much less great; but all his care did not make a Don José that we remember beside the impersonations of Jean de Reszke or Alvarez.

Much of the volume will be of special interest to singers. One very interesting and important chapter is devoted to his method of breathing, another to his method of tone production. Some of the actual *solfeggi* he used are quoted

* "Caruso and the Art of Singing." By Salvatore Fucito and Barnet J. Beyer. 10s. 6d. net. (Fisher Unwin.)

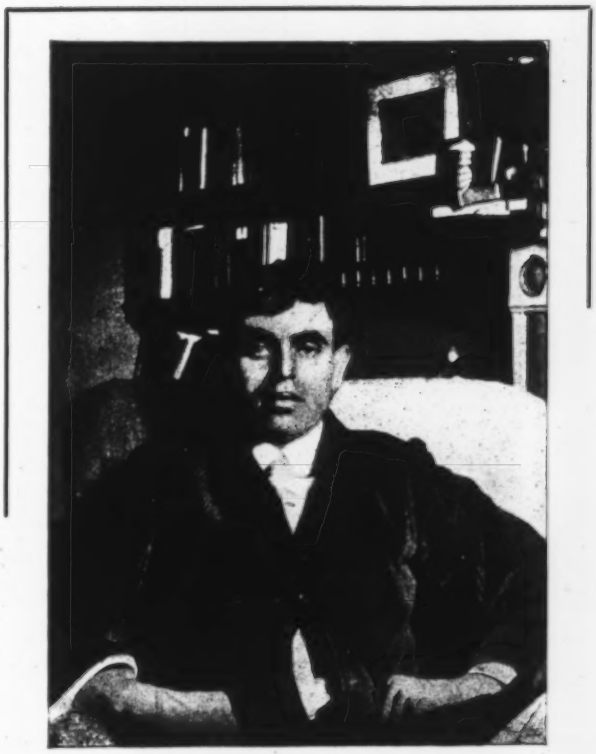
From "SELECTED POEMS OF JOHN DRINKWATER"
(Sidgwick & Jackson).

JOHN DRINKWATER.
(From a drawing by Eric Kennington).

J. M. Barrie
from Tusitala
(Robert Louis Stevenson)

From "I CAN REMEMBER ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON."
Edited by ROSALINE MASSON
(Chambers).

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.



From "JAMES ELROY FLECKER"
(Chapman & Hall).

FLECKER IN HIS ROOMS AT CAMBRIDGE.

Who illustrates this year
"THE FAIRY TALES OF PERRAULT"
(Harrap).

MR. HARRY CLARKE.

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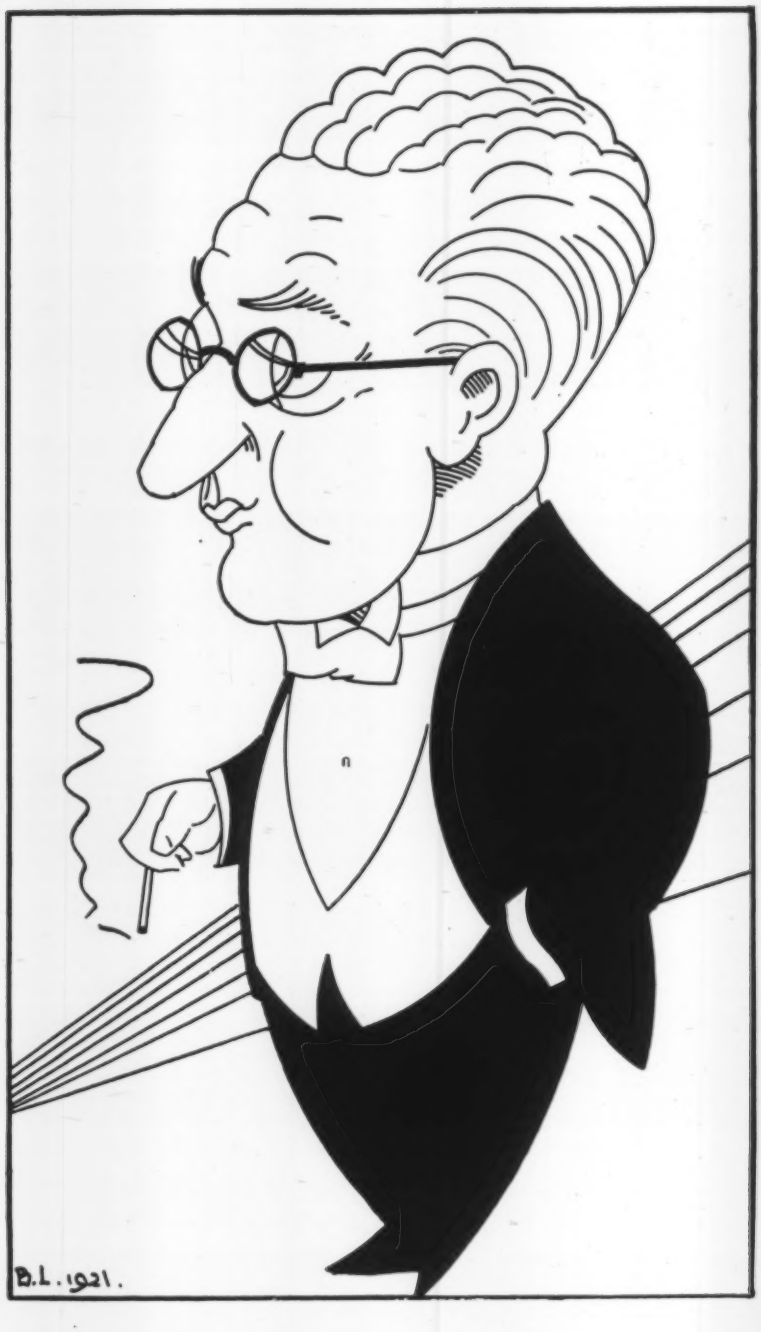

From "DECORATIONS AND ABSURDITIES."
By BOHUN LYNCH and REGINALD BERKELEY
(Collins .

ST. JOHN ERVINE
(Drawn by Bohun Lynch).

From "HAMLET."
Decorated by JOHN AUSTEN
(Selwyn & Blount).

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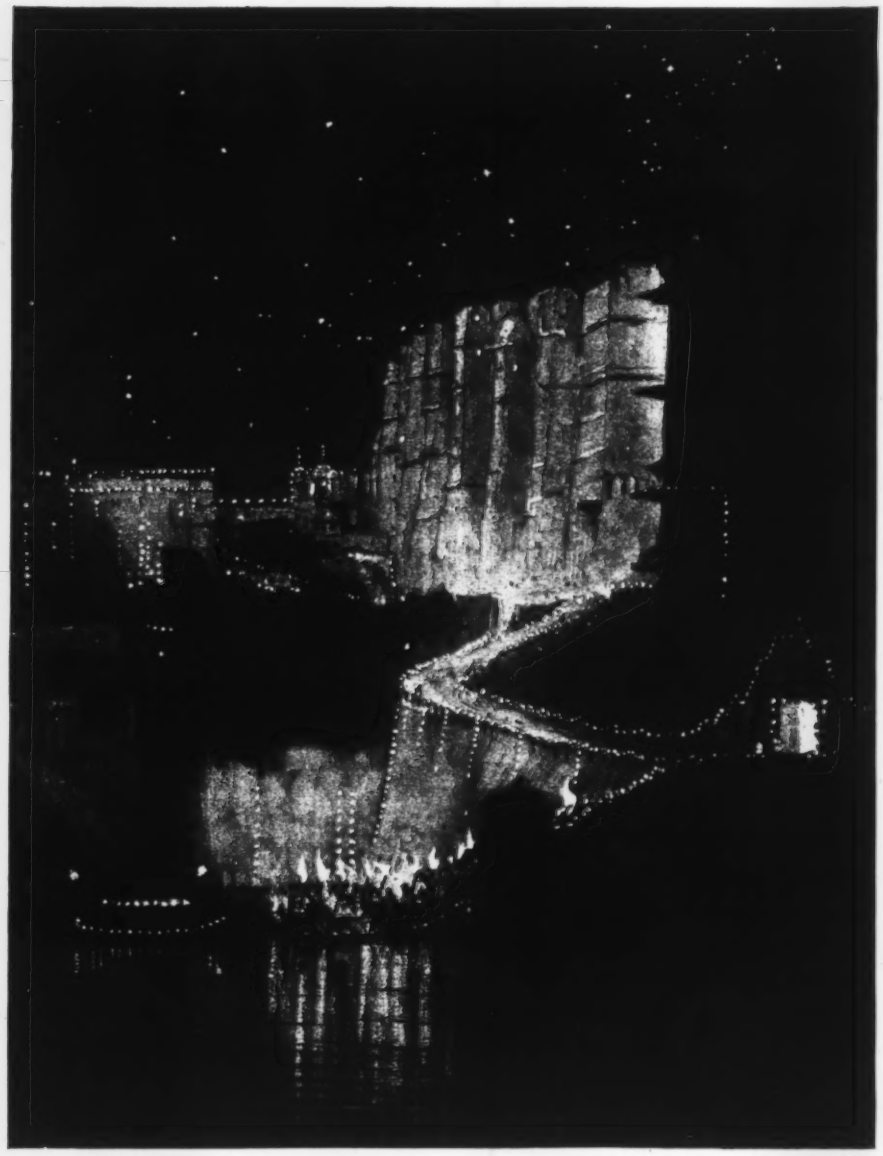
From "FISHING BOATS AND BARGES FROM THE THAMES TO LAND'S END."
By WALTER WOOD.
With twenty woodcuts by C. A. WILKINSON
(John Lane).

OLD THAMES HATCH BOATS.

From "FISHING BOATS AND BARGES FROM THE THAMES TO LAND'S END."
By WALTER WOOD.
With twenty woodcuts by C. A. WILKINSON
(John Lane).

CORNISH DRIFTERS, LOOE.

XUM



From the Painting by DONALD MAXWELL
in "THE PRINCE OF WALES' EASTERN BOOK"
(Hodder & Stoughton).

THE PRINCE ARRIVES AT THE LAKE-SIDE PALACE, UDAIPUR.

in the accounts of his vocal practice. The young singer should read with care (and humility) every word of these pages; for though practice will not make a Caruso, it will make for improvement. Caruso's own voice and vocal art developed enormously in our English knowledge of him, from the night in 1902 when he first appeared in "Rigoletto," to the fatal year 1914, which gave us not only the last of Caruso, but the last of many things even more important than great tenors.

The volume, as we have said, is hardly worthy of its subject, but it is certainly very interesting, and it is adorned with some excellent portraits. We should have liked more of these. The happy persons who heard Caruso himself will be glad to have this reminder of his artistic greatness; those who know him only through the gramophone will find something here to make their records come alive.

GEORGE SAMPSON.

ARABIAN NIGHTS.*

When the "Arabian Nights" first became known in Europe through the translation of Galland, they produced a crop of imitations. Some of these are not without merit; but all, except perhaps "Vathek," fail to give the most essential note of the "Nights"—the primitive cruelty and lust, the causeless anger, the violence and savage colour which are at least as noticeable as the fantasy, the farce or the beauty. Some of us have wondered at the great reputation which the late James Flecker had among his friends. One found something extravagant and ridiculous in the praise lavished on his poems by men who were often engaged in belittling Swinburne and Tennyson, not to mention the minor men of the nineties, to whom Flecker owed a great deal. I do not think the more guarded verdict on Flecker's poetry was wrong. Nothing that Mr. Goldring says in the memoir of his friend induces me to change my opinion that Flecker's poetry is, while technically of great competence, often derivative, and without great depth of feeling. There are exceptions to this; but I do not believe he will be remembered as a poet except through a few pieces in anthologies, as Dowson and Lionel Johnson, Davidson and H. D. Lowry will be remembered. But with the issue of "Hassan" the enthusiasm of Flecker's friends who have long known the play is explained and nobly justified. Here is a great drama, greatly written; and here is at last the child of that strange terror and beauty which came into Europe when the "Nights" were first done into French. "Hassan" is, however, in prose—prose of great subtlety, of vivid music, of sonorous rhetoric, of at times the most distracting pathos. Whether Flecker would ever have become a great poet, we cannot now decide; but it is very certain that before his death he was already a great prose writer. This would not have been guessed from the "Collected Prose," issued this year by Messrs. Bell, and now reprinted (though there is no note in the book to explain this) by Messrs. Heinemann. Most of this volume is negligible stuff—crude often, occasionally entertaining, and sometimes—as in the preface to "The Golden Journey of Samarkand"—of great critical interest. In the future, however, I have no doubt that Flecker will mean "Hassan," just as FitzGerald means the "Rubáiyát," or Beckford means "Vathek."

Hassan is a confectioner of Bagdad. His story opens farcically. Hassan, fat, ugly, middle-aged, has fallen in love. He has at once confidence and no confidence. He knows that he burns with the real flame, and he knows that this fact is not one which anyone will be likely to recognise, least of all Yasmin, the beloved. In the character of Yasmin Flecker shows that he is not going to shirk the brutality proper to the East. Never has a detestable type been dealt with so truly as in Flecker's portrayal of this vicious, sensual, cruel harlot who mocks and torments Hassan as she embraces the friend to whom he gave his confidence and who has betrayed him. Before the end of the first act, when Hassan is sent by the poet to join Haroun al-Raschid and his Vizier in the mysterious palace, I was already keyed up to an excitement which the rest of the play never allowed to flag. In the second act we meet again not only the Caliph and Hassan, but Rafi, King of the Beggars, who boasts to his unknown guests of his plot against the palace, and tells the story of his love for Pervaneh, his beloved, whom the Caliph's eunuchs bought for a master so sated with pleasure that he has never even seen her. The act may be criticised perhaps for the humours between the Chief of the Police and the Captain of the Military, who rescue Haroun; they are not unamusing in themselves, but are rather protracted, and a little too reminiscent of pantomime. I am not sure, however, that in performance these parts will not be found to be an almost necessary relief from the horrors which are to come in the next two acts.

The third act shows Hassan high in the favour of the Caliph, favour as brittle as Hassan's own confections. Haroun, as Flecker gives him, is an æsthete, a Nero with a Nero's taste for poetry and blood. Hassan is a man of real imagination, a poet and a lover of beauty; and one who shrinks from cruelty. So when the Caliph sits in judgment on Rafi and Pervaneh and gives them the monstrous choice of either one day together and then death in torments, or life-long separation, Hassan finds it impossible to hold his peace. The poet Ishak tells Hassan what their master is really like:

> "Agony is a fine colour and he delights therein as a painter in vermilion new brought from Kurdistan. But shall so great an artist not love contrast? To clasp a silver belt round the loins of a filthy beggar while a slave darkens the sole of his late vizier, is for him but a jest touched with a sense of the appropriate: and I have seen it enacted in this very room."

In the fourth act we are present at the passionate, heart-rending dialogue between Rafi and Pervaneh as they discuss, in their cell, the Caliph's terms. This is the greatest scene in the play; and it has not any rival in our dramatic literature since Shelley wrote "The Cenci." The pitiful humanity of this talk between the two lovers, the agony as they weigh love against death, and death in disgrace and torture:

> PERVANEH: Sweet life—we die for thy sweetness, O Lord of the Garden of Peace. Come, love, and die for the fire that beats within us; for the air that blows around us, for the mountains of our country and the winds among their pines, you and I accept torture and confront our end. We are in the service of the World. The voice of the rolling deep is shouting: "Suffer that my waves may mourn." The company of the stars sing out: "Be brave that we may shine." The spirits of children not yet born whisper as they crowd around us: "Endure that we may conquer."
>
> RAFI: Pervaneh! Pervaneh!
>
> PERVANEH: Hark! Hark!—down through the spheres—the Trumpeter of Immortality! "Die, lest I be shamed, lovers! Die, lest I be shamed!"
>
> RAFI: Die then, Pervaneh, for thy great reasons. Me no ecstasy can help through the hour of peril. I die for love alone.

The last act, in which we all but see the torture and death of the lovers, an agony which Hassan is forced to watch and which Yasmin gloats over with a blood-lust that appeals to the heart of the filthy negro executioner, is almost unbearable. As I finished the book, I felt that conviction which does not often come in reading a modern book, that here was a real addition to the world's masterpieces. Here, in the character of Hassan and in the figures of the two lovers, Flecker has given to the rare catalogue of immortal beauty three who will share the legendary reality of the great historical, and the great created, people who live in our memories. The play ends with Flecker's best poem, "The Golden Journey," as Ishak and Hassan abandon the luxury and cruelty, the lust and careless wealth of Bagdad for the mysterious city.

> "We are the pilgrims, master; we shall go
> Always a little farther: it may be
> Beyond that last blue mountain barred with snow,
> Across that angry or that glimmering sea,

* "Hassan." By J. E. Flecker. 6s. (Heinemann.)—"Collected Prose." By J. E. Flecker. 6s. (Heinemann.)—"J. E. Flecker." By Douglas Goldring. 7s. 6d. (Chapman & Hall.)

XUM

" White on a throne or guarded in a cave
There lives a prophet who can understand
Why men were born; but surely we are brave
Who take the Golden Road to Samarkand."

R. ELLIS ROBERTS.

MISS MAPP.*

Mr. Benson has made a narrative out of what are usually regarded as the trimmings of a novel, the small circumstances, the everyday conversations, the hourly happenings of ordinary people. Tilling is a quiet township which no event from the outside world disturbs and gossip is its daily food.

With his picture of Miss Mapp Mr. Benson has achieved a big success. Of age about forty, a woman in whom the vivifying emotions of anger and curiosity have preserved an astonishing activity of mind and body, she sits at her window that looks out on the High Street of the town. From this strategic position nothing of importance escapes her notice. With the data supplied by the window she embarks on schemes that direct the whole course of the township's life. It is surprising how quickly Miss Mapp's curiosity about her neighbours becomes our own. The Tilling atmosphere is very pervading. Before fifty pages are past we are agreeing with Captain Puffin that " the sweet amenities of village life, its pleasant conversations and companionships, its topped drives and incalculable incidents wear a glamour and a preciousness that are bound up with life itself."

The book is very clever and highly diverting. It is more clever and more diverting in the earlier than in the later pages, because Mr. Benson has not been able wholly to overcome the difficulty of continuing to make the commonplace interesting. The trivial, losing for a moment the godlike qualities with which he has invested it, shows feet of clay.

The intricacies of Mr. Benson's workmanship are interesting to watch. In drawing his characters he is more concerned with their actual thoughts than with the elegances of expression in which convention cloaks their words, though no one can repeat more mellifluously than he the inanities of village gossip. He shows us processes of mind whose interplay is swifter and more uniform in pattern than speech.

Shut the book and argue that most of its biggest scenes are storms in tea-cups. Might not the energies which Miss Mapp uses to find whether she is being asked to the Poppits' bridge-party as a stopgap or as an honoured guest have been applied to finer purpose? Mr. Benson is at liberty to reply that while we are among the tea-cups of Tilling the storm is very real.

M. S.

THE STILL, SMALL VOICE.†

A couple of centuries ago Steele put into a letter of congratulation some of the sterling ideals and principles that had actuated his colleague Addison in starting the *Spectator*. It would take up too much space to quote the whole, but a typical sentence is worth while:

" I can't say, indeed, that you have put Impertinence to Silence, or Vanity out of Countenance; but methinks you have bid as fair for it, as any man that ever appeared upon a publick Stage, and offer an infallible Cure of Vice and Folly."

That was a high tribute and not undeserved. Indeed it remains a wonder still that Addison and his associates could have touched life at so many points and in so many aspects, and maintained on the whole such a consistent social philosophy. Since then the Press has broadened its area and found a mission in pretty nearly every corner of the world's activity; but as with human nature itself, it may be questioned if it has appreciably improved. We can still hear the savage intolerance of Sir Roger L'Estrange and the ponderous thunders of Dr. Johnson, but they die away in a desert of triviality and hustle and worse, and there are few papers that would emerge from a strict judgment on their intellectual form and right intention. Of these, even its opponents would admit that the *Spectator* of to-day is one, just as in the days of Richard Holt Hutton and Meredith Townsend. One recalls that fine sentence of Townsend's when he reminded us that to understand Asia we had to remember that she was continental in the scale of her calamities. As for Hutton's fine dicta on men and movements, they recur to memory like the rushing wind through a grove of oak. Mr. Strachey gives us welcome recollections of these men and many more, and one of the best is Townsend's gracious mock-assent to an opponent: " Certainly, you have every right to be wrong." It beats infallibility itself.

But the essence and the permanent interest in this book lie in its unfolding of the author's development. It shows the uncrumpling of a highly complex growth, and in so far as it includes confessions of error, it " makes his sowl," as the Irish say. His advantages were inherited, and they included not only the fostering influence of an ancient and intellectual family, but a houseful of " good old English reading," and what was even more necessary for a journalist and a *censor morum*, a genuine interest in affairs and ideas. This comes out consistently in his handling of politics, literature, war, travel and everything else, and does not exclude a seasoned optimism which the author's coevals well may envy. Here is a sample:

" The war has left us in poverty and in peril. But even though our poverty and our peril are largely the result of the mismanagement of those to whom we have entrusted the work of reconstruction, I am not going to sit down by the international roadside and rave about it. The way in which that social peril and that poverty have been borne by the vast majority of our population has been wholly admirable. I am optimist enough to find and rejoice in a nobility of sacrifice in all classes which to my mind is earnest that the future of our half of the English-speaking race—of the other half no sane man need have any doubts—will be as great as was its past."

Even an editor whose preoccupation is with " views not news " has to admit that news has prime place with the generality of men. He even makes it a present of a case where the publication of a chance glimpse, without apparent relevance or importance, led to the saving of a life. True, the man saved was an editor, but one need not accuse Mr. Strachey of partiality for his cloth. We cannot all be editors, but we can cultivate quick and accurate observation, and the knack of setting it down in good plain terms—faculties which are rarer, even on the press, than most folk suppose.

There are no chapters in this most engrossing book better than those upon the war, and it is not easy at this late date to waken interest in that quarter without startling disclosures. Possibly one's enjoyment of the last " Unwritten Chapters " is flavoured by the implied promise of another volume, one where the author may see fit to relax his present rule not to deal with persons still alive. After all, he is very much alive himself, and the value of what he has to say concerning his contemporaries cannot always improve with keeping. For instance, he may be sparing the sensibilities of an illustrious neighbour who is also very much alive, but why omit from this book the crusade for rifle ranges and marksmanship which the *Spectator* carried through some years before the war? It would bring Dean Inge down upon us, perhaps, if we hinted at a special providence at work in a case like that, but if anything in this country contributed towards the winning of the war it was that perfectly innocent campaign in favour of a manly pastime. This is only one of many instances where the British public is under a debt to a paper which has shown itself to be one of the most incorrigibly British institutions of our time. Many a wise and friendly book has been compiled out of its pages, and many a national decision has been taken where the *Spectator* had played the unpopular pioneer. Mr. Strachey's book explains the process by which pluck and conservative

* " Miss Mapp." By E. F. Benson. 7s. 6d. (Hutchinson.)

† " The Adventure of Living: being a Subjective Autobiography." By John St. Loe Strachey. 20s. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

patriotism have forced their views and warnings home, and many of its best passages will go to build up the unwritten *Gradus ad Parnassum* for editors-to-be. But perhaps the secret why the *Spectator* has kept its sense of responsibility acute and its mentality mellow is the fact that though it is published on the edge of Fleet Street, the best part of its thinking is done elsewhere. Somehow a typical number always gives the feeling—to one of its admirers anyhow—of a brisk turn along the ridge of the Surrey Downs, ending in a quiet arm-chair smoke among the books and papers of a ripe old study. There is a dog or two stretched upon the rug before a sea-coal fire, and the talk "is for ever England." The selfsame feeling permeates this book, and that is why, apart from its intrinsic merit of thought and style, it bids fair to have a lasting value.

J. P. COLLINS.

MORE OUTSPOKEN ESSAYS.*

Dean Inge has evidently been at a loss about a title for this book of essays. He wanted one which was less challenging than "Outspoken Essays," less provocative indeed, since his new book "contains nothing very daring or unconventional." But he was well advised to call the book a second series. He has given us "more outspoken essays," and the "more" qualifies "essays," not "outspoken." To be outspoken is not necessarily to tread on the tail of your opponent's coat, like a belligerent Irishman. It is to do what Matthew Arnold said that Gray never did, to speak out. This implies that one has something to say, and those who may disagree with some of Dean Inge's views will be the first to agree that he is a man who deserves attention. He knows his own mind, for one thing. He can expound philosophy and sociology lucidly, for another thing. Even the challenging quality is not absent from this book; it is a characteristic which reappears, for example, in these two passages:

Photo by Elliott & Fry. **Dean Inge.**

"I have no wish to make an attack on the Church of Rome; but it happens to be the most prominent example of a Church which has assimilated nothing of scientific ethics. My own Church has learned something, but is still lamentably behind the best lay conscience. During the agitation against the cruelties practised in the plumage trade, a lady who was working for the Plumage Bill tried to enlist the sympathies of Roman Catholics, and failed completely. The answer which she received was: 'The lower animals were made for our use; we have no duties towards them.' This is, I am sorry to say, the common view among Roman Catholics."

"Let those who are disposed to follow the present evil fashion of disparaging the great Victorians make a collection of their heads in photographs or engravings, and compare them with those of their own favourites. Let them set up in a row portraits of Tennyson, Charles Darwin, Gladstone, Manning, Newman, Martineau, Lord Lawrence, Burne-Jones and, if they like, a dozen lesser luminaries, and ask themselves candidly whether men of this stature are any longer among us."

The first of the seven essays is a "Confessio Fidei," a frank, incisive statement of the author's religious philosophy: "I shall be classified, I suppose, as belonging to the right wing of theological liberalism. But I prefer to call myself a Christian Platonist." The first part of the essay, on the metaphysics of this Christian Platonism, is better reading than the latter part, probably because in the latter Dean Inge is summarising data which he and others have already discussed more adequately. Faith in the absolute values of Truth, Beauty and Goodness is pronounced essential, and in a singularly moving passage the writer confesses the need of a mystical experience in order to verify such knowledge of the divine nature. He will not part with the historical element in Christianity; plainly his mysticism is not of the kind which would get past the Son to the Father. But his discussion of the historical element in Christianity raises a number of issues which are not co-ordinated with the philosophical position adopted at the beginning of the essay. The implicates of revelation, for example, are more complex than these pages would suggest. Nevertheless the total impression made by the essay is positive and heartening. The "confession of faith" ends in more than theism, and the grave survey closes with an assurance that the Christian religion and the Christian churches need fear no evil—except compromising with evil or resting in outworn intellectual forms. "Nothing could destroy the Christian churches except the complete decay and submergence of the white race, a most improbable contingency. Ages of belief and of unbelief follow each other, and perhaps both are wrongly named. And if the churches seem fairly secure, much more so is the revelation of which they are the guardians."

The white race problem occupies another essay on "The White Man and His Rivals," a review article which unfortunately will not be read by the very class which needs its warnings most. "The Dilemma of Civilisation" handles a similar problem, the sociological evils produced by industrial progress; it drops, among other good sayings, the sensible remark that "it is very doubtful whether the Western European is really more covetous either than his ancestors before the industrial revolution, or than the picturesque and romantic Asiatic." The notion that the dollar has more hold of the European than the rupee has of the Indian is one of the sentimental fallacies that ought to be knocked on the head. The "eugenics" essay is a call to action rather than a reasoned plea. It is a pendant to the pages on "The Idea of Progress," where Dean Inge is at his best, in a suggestive, unsentimental survey of the current notions on the subject.

For educational value, the five Hibbert Lectures on "The State, Visible and Invisible" are probably the main contribution of the volume:

> "Yonder's the sea, and there's a ship: how't tumbles!
> And there's a rock lies watching under water.
> Now, now, it beats upon it; now, now, now,
> There's a leak sprung!"

We might apply these Elizabethan lines to Dean Inge's general view of civilisation. He sees the ship of the State in danger, and he points out curtly both the rocks to avoid and the leaks to be stopped. He even warns men against false pilots. "A nation which takes for prophets irrationalists like Mr. Kidd and Mr. Chesterton has no right to complain of emotional politicians."

For good sense and brightness, the essay on "The Victorian Age" will appeal to most readers, were it only on account of the timely protest against a cheap depreciation of Tennyson. Dean Inge's trenchant pages on this matter are an excellent accompaniment to Mr. Andrew Lang's book on Tennyson. This essay shows Dean Inge at his best as an analyst of social and literary progress. Besides, it is written with unwonted verve, not unmixed with delicate irony.

"As if," Byron exclaimed once about lecturing, "as if a man disgraced himself by instructing and pleasing at the same time!" Dean Inge does both, and does them gracefully, with the ease of a highly-trained mind. He has again given us a volume of rare stimulus and penetration. We hear him thinking aloud and, whatever his thoughts are, they are independent as well as fearless; he thinks things out, in a world of illogical creatures.

It is a small point, but surely Dean Inge is more terse than accurate when he says that "the historian is a natural snob; he sides with the gods against Cato, and approves the winning side." Does he? Not always. Think of Tacitus.

JAMES MOFFATT.

* "Outspoken Essays." (Second Series.) By William Ralph Inge, C.V.O., D.D., F.B.A. 6s. (Longmans.)

XUM

MONDAY'S CHILDREN.*

Here is a book that should please everybody. In it Mr. E. O. Hoppé, who is one of the best pictorial photographers of the day, has gathered together the portraits of thirty-two women accounted fair not only by the camera-artist but also, presumably, by public opinion in the land of their birth. For this is not a book of British beauties; it is international in scope, and though it begins in Albion it ends in far Cathay. Consequently it has an ethnographic in addition to its æsthetic interest, and will provide its happy possessor with material both for a private beauty competition of his own and for the comparative study of racial types.

Feminine beauty is a thing about which it is easy to argue, but difficult to convince. Nine men out of ten will declare that it is a matter of taste, and the tenth will demur at the suggestion that its recognition can be aided by knowledge. Nevertheless, if for the moment we disregard the beauty that is only "skin deep," it will generally be admitted that the basis of good looks, whether in men or women, is regularity of features. The first test for any stringent beauty competition should be a view of the profile, and remarkably few candidates would survive it if the judges knew their business. Fortunately a great number of the photographs in this book are profile portraits, and from them there is a great deal to be learnt. Before we have turned over twenty pages we perceive that it is much easier to be good-looking from the crown of the head to about half-way down the bridge of the nose than to be beautiful from nostrils to chin. Secondly we notice that this falling-off in the lower half of the face is particularly marked in the photographs of what we may call the semi-civilised beauties. An illuminating example in this respect is the representative of the Dutch West Indies, whose head, till we reach her upper lip, would be admitted as beautiful by any European connoisseur. But even this exquisite photograph, which has sculptural force in its rendering of form and light and shade, cannot hide—though it does soften—the protruding mouth and receding chin. Another splendid photograph is that of the Red Indian, "Princess White Deer" (23), who but for her scantiness of chin would be a formidable competitor for the first prize even in this international competition.

The British Isles are represented by a strong team, and although the photograph of Miss Gladys Cooper does not do full justice to her almost classic grace, the portraits of the pseudonymous "Hebe" (1) and of the Irish Miss Grace D'Arcy are admirable studies of beauties whose features are well-nigh flawless. Lady Diana Duff-Cooper submits herself to the profile test and comes out tolerably well, though her mouth is seen to be her weak point. Another cinema-star, Miss Malvina Longfellow (21) is also represented by a profile from which we learn that her nose is a trifle too long. Good noses are rare. Mrs. Lydig Hoyt, also of America, has one; but unfortunately it joins her forehead at too acute an angle to please one seeking for perfection and so spoils her chances, otherwise excellent, as a prizewinner. Sweden's representative, Miss Anna Q. Nillson (16), with her fluffy hair and feather fan, is the perfect incarnation of chocolate-box prettiness, but she evades the profile test. Madame Mika Mikum (14) of Poland, not only puts up with it but shows her reverse in a mirror, and her delicately chiselled features give us opportunity to say nothing nastier than that her mouth might have been a wee bit smaller with advantage. Her chin is one of the best in the collection.

There is only one famous type missing in this attractive assembly, and that is the Venus of Milo. Greece, for some reason or other, is omitted from the nations invited to the feast, and in the whole book there is not one Grecian nose to put the others out of joint.

By way of introduction to the portrait-gallery which Mr. Hoppé provides, Mr. Richard King discourses through some pages on "Beauty" and "Charm," but nobody is likely to pay any attention to what he (or another) writes on these subjects. Eugenists and æsthetes may preach as to what is desirable, but in the matter of feminine beauty man will continue to be obstinate and proceed to make his own natural selection.

FRANK RUTTER.

* "The Book of Fair Women." By E. O. Hoppé and Richard King. 25s. (Jonathan Cape.)

"BEACHCOMBER."*

I have so long been accustomed on taking up the *Daily Express* to turn to the columns signed "Beachcomber"—and more particularly the latter part thereof—that it was with quite unusual interest that I saw the announcement of this volume. All too rarely does work produced in the circumstances attendant upon those who have to turn out their daily tale of words for the newspapers bear becomingly the dignity of promotion to book form; but the ticklesome enjoyment found in some of the wonderful yarns, inventions, perversions and parodies that appeared over the signature of "Beachcomber" suggested that those things deserved a fate less fleeting than that of a daily paper. There should be many readers who will gladly welcome their reappearance, but I fancy that there will also be some who will wonder "what the dickens the fellow is driving at" and others who will be inclined to use variants of Professor Bodger's monosyllabic criticism "Bilge!" There are some matter-of-fact folks into whose hands I should like to put the volume—just to watch their air of puzzlement!—for it must be admitted that "Beachcomber's" particular brand of humour is by no means of the ordinary stereotyped kind, it is something fresh and individual, and while to some of us it is deliciously arriding, to others may appear nothing but sheer foolery.

The writer seems gifted with the power of turning any item of news in a kind of topsy-turvy fashion into something new and strange, by means of some innate whimsicality of his own. Exaggeration has its part, but it is not exaggeration of the conventional kind, it is exaggeration with a quaint kink in it. Indeed much of this "farrago of absurd conceits"—to apply words that were collocated in a wholly different connection—suggests nothing so much as the appearance of a literary Heath Robinson. As that artist can devise the most elaborately ridiculous things out of everyday doings, so that the running of a motor-car or the digging of coal becomes an excursion into a domain of extravagant drollery, even so "Beachcomber" takes a farmers' club dinner, a drawing-room ditty, a scientific meeting, a Russian play, a fairy story, or anything else as a "peg" on which he hangs a droll fancy or some diverting piece of ridiculous extravagance.

In selecting a number of these pieces to "make a book of them," the author has linked them into a kind of loose unity by setting them forth as letters addressed to a nephew far away in a "lonely igloo in N'jonga-N'jonga." The author, who has so long been familiar by his pen-name of "Beachcomber" to readers of that daily paper of which his work is a regular feature, now stands revealed as Mr. D. B. Wyndham Lewis, and to Mr. Lewis will be accorded the hearty thanks of all who can enjoy for its own sake fun that is fresh and unforced. In his digs at pomposity, at *vers libres* and other things, the author may sometimes show himself the satirist, but for the most part he is just content to let himself go in delicious irresponsibility, to play with his theme and to entertain us with his playing. If he has a fondness for making fun of such things as the, to our ears, over consonanted names of Slavonic peoples, it is perhaps an excusable bit of "playing to the gallery," for to the mass of people there is something funny in the mere assembling of letters before the eyes in a way that seems to be as a trap in which the tongue is to be caught.

WALTER JERROLD.

* "A London Farrago." By D. B. W. Lewis. 6s. (Cecil Palmer.)

STELLENBERG

From the oil-painting by K. Gwelo Goodman.

From "HISTORIC HOUSES OF SOUTH AFRICA."
By DOROTHEA FAIRBRIDGE.

With 10 coloured plates after oil-paintings by Gwelo Goodman, 4 collotype plates, 177 half-tone illustrations, and 33 drawings in the text.

XUM

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.*

"Who can listen to objection regarding such a book as this?" wrote Thackeray of "A Christmas Carol," on its first appearance, in 1843. "It seems to me a national benefit, and to every man or woman who reads it a personal kindness. The last two people I heard speak of it were women; neither knew the other or the author, and both said by way of criticism, 'God bless him!'" Here, in this facsimile edition, you have the "Carol" printed, illustrated and bound, to the wonderful green end papers and the title page in red and blue, exactly as it was when Thackeray and his contemporaries read it. Leech's eight illustrations, four in colour and four in black-and-white, have become an essential part of the book; no modern artist can adequately replace them, for no modern artist can so intimately realise the life and character of its period. One has a fancy that rereading it in the form of its original appearance you more readily recapture the atmosphere of the story and the spirit in which it was written. And when you recapture these (for we are grown sophisticated and have lost something of that spirit) the tale opens all its heart to you—all its kindness and illimitable pity for the poor and suffering; all its as illimitable scorn of those whose cupidity, meanness and hardness inflict such suffering; and you will appreciate to the full that eulogy of Thackeray's.

Carefully segregated in the forefront of the reprint are an Introduction by Mr. G. K. Chesterton, and a Preface by Mr. B. W. Matz. Mr. Chesterton calls it the most genial and fanciful of Dickens's stories, and pays tribute to the good work he did by saving Christmas before it had become unpopular. Once it had become unpopular, he says, a hundred æsthetes would have been ready to revive it. "But coming when he did, Dickens could appeal to a living tradition and not to a lost art. He was able to save the thing from dying, instead of trying to raise it from the dead." Mr. Matz gives a very interesting account of all the difficulties that had to be overcome before it was possible to produce so exact a facsimile of the first edition, with the precise shade of green for the end papers and an accurate presentation of Leech's hand-coloured pictures. He supplements this with an account of how Dickens wrote the story and the enthusiasm with which it was received, and the adventures of the MS. among collectors. It is a beautifully produced and charming little volume; nothing could be better as a Christmas gift-book except that when you have bought it you don't want to give it away. And if you buy a second copy for a friend you will be doing the right Christmas thing in giving him pleasure and benefiting a most useful institution, for the proceeds of the sale are to go in aid of the National Book Trade Provident Society.

A.

BARRIE MARVELL.†

To some men has been given the gift of song; to others the power of making pictures; but to a few has been granted the greatest gift of all—the power of understanding. Of these last is Charles Vince.

When he wrote "The Street of Faces" he showed a great promise; in "Wayfarers in Arcady" he lost himself a little; but in "Barrie Marvell" he has more than fulfilled the promise of earlier days. He has shown that he possesses at once the power to understand and the words in which to clothe his knowledge. Barrie Marvell is a little boy—an ordinary, everyday, rather solitary little boy. Out of his yearnings and desires, his observations and his discoveries Vince has made a story that is a laugh and a sob together. One can see "Uncle" Vince, as we used to call him, sitting at his desk, his kind eyes peering through the gold-rimmed spectacles, his mind far away, his pen moving almost mechanically across the paper as he sets down the thoughts and ambitions of that child-hero into whose very soul he has entered.

One of the great tragedies of life is the difficulty of the Grown-up when he tries to understand the Child. That tragedy should never come to Charles Vince. There is an unconsciously pathetic uncle in the book—one sees him, a robust, hearty man with jujubes and a toy pistol in his pocket—who throws himself with zest into Barrie's pursuits, and succeeds in robbing the game of the moment of every atom of the romance which was its life to Barrie. But he meant regrettably well. . . .

There are other people, too. The house-painters, for example, one of whom took Barrie perilously up on to the roof, where the wind blew strongly, and held him fast while the boy looked forth over the world. True, the painter did not know that Barrie was an Admiral, and that he himself and his mates were trusty sailors, but at least he did not destroy Barrie's picture.

And the strange man on the road who gave Barrie red plums and taught him to sing a little French song that was entrancing, and who spoke so wisely of the house round the corner and of divers other things—he was a wonderful fellow.

I would like to tell you, also, of many other interesting things: of the house that was built while Barrie watched it grow, and of the three fairies he met, disguised in flannel trousers, and what they said to him and he to them; and of the wind that blew and the dreams that came to him; but I could not tell you half so well as Vince tells you, and I will not spoil his pictures with unskilful daubs.

It is a book to be read by every one—by the father who longs to bridge the gulf of years between himself and his little son; by the woman who cradles her baby on her knees, dreading the time when she will no longer be the whole world to it; by the childless who yet have in them a reverence for innocence and a tenderness for the beautiful things of life.

FRANCIS D. GRIERSON.

IN PARTIBUS FIDELIUM.*

Mr. Porritt has been in touch with some politicians; he hardly conceals his lack of sympathy with Earl Balfour and Mr. Lloyd George. But this contact furnishes only a very minor item to his reminiscences. He has moved mainly in the religious world of Nonconformity, and it is upon his experiences among clergymen of the dissenting churches that he draws for the bulk of his anecdotes. He has kept notebooks, to help his memory. The result is this book of pleasant, random recollections. As he admits: "It is the nature of recollections to be indiscreet; but indiscretions may be neither malicious nor mischievous, especially if they concern things said and done in years that have passed into history." Which is true, though not all the truth. There are some things said, for example, about Dr. Maclaren and Professor

Photo by Vandyk. **Mr. Arthur Porritt.**

* "A Christmas Carol in Prose." By Charles Dickens. Facsimile of First Edition. With Introduction by G. K. Chesterton, and a Preface by B. W. Matz. 6s. (Cecil Palmer.)

† "Barrie Marvell." By Charles Vince. (Philip Allan.)

* "The Best I Remember." By Arthur Porritt. 7s. 6d. (Cassell.)

Henry Drummond, which might have been left unsaid. Still, the tone of the book is innocuous as well as brisk. Mr. Porritt has his sympathies and antipathies; they lend a flavour to his pages, and on the whole they do not lead to any indiscreet revelations.

To review a book of this kind is not an easy task. Perhaps the fairest method is to dip into its pages for what is fresh and characteristic. At one point, he argues that: "The really unforgettable thrills are the first glimpse of one's first baby, the first kindly review of one's first book, holing a very long putt on a golf green, digging the very first potatoes one has ever grown—all simple, homely, commonplace episodes in life, but all, somehow, tinged with sacramental felicity." These are experiences, no doubt, even that of the potatoes. But, let me add, the first money you ever earn, and the first salmon you catch.

One chapter is devoted to W. G. Grace, and in it Mr. Porritt discloses the interesting secret that he wrote Grace's "Reminiscences." The great cricketer talked and dictated, but he could not wield a pen as he wielded a cricket bat. Apparently Grace had only one lung. This adds him to the small list of men with the same handicap who have achieved high reputation in this field or in that.

Another curious reminiscence is of Stead's disillusionment over Messrs. Torrey and Alexander, the American evangelists. Stead caught Torrey telling falsehoods about Tom Paine's moral character, and when the evangelist refused to withdraw his statement, the journalist's support was withheld. The Torrey-Alexander mission, he rightly argues, nearly killed professional evangelism. "We have had no serious attempt to revive that brass-bandy method of evangelism since that ghastly failure."

Mr. Porritt once heard Talmage:

"It was just after a silly woman had thrown a ginger-nut at Mr. Gladstone and cut the Grand Old Man's eye. Talmage was furious at the outrage, and in his sermon declared that before the sun went down that day America's thundering denunciation of the vile deed would reverberate across the Atlantic. I watched the cables for the thunder, but the reverberations did not come. A fortnight later the *New York Herald* came to hand with a single-line note on the incident: 'As usual, Gladstone takes the cake.'"

He has some good American stories, but none better than the retort made by John Burns to a Canadian, who was disparaging the Thames and praising the Ottawa river. "Oh," said Burns, "but the Thames is not a river; it is liquid history."

It appears, from Mr. Porritt's evidence, that King Edward desired once to hear the Rev. R. J. Campbell:

"The King could not go to a Dissenting Chapel or the heavens would have fallen. But Edward VII was not the man to be thwarted by any little obstacle, and a plan was formulated for Mr. Campbell to preach at Windsor Castle Chapel one Sunday. All the arrangements were kept secret. But Mr. Campbell, just before the date fixed, upset the whole scheme by publicly protesting at the City Temple against the Tsar Nicholas of Russia being given a national welcome in England just after the peasants' massacre at Moscow. That was an unforgivable offence against royalty, and King Edward in consequence never heard Mr. Campbell preach."

Apart from stories, the book surveys some of the changes which the writer has witnessed during his life, e.g. the commercialising of journalism and what he calls "The Decay of Dissent." "With each successive release from a grievance, the Free Churches seem also to have lost some vitality." But Mr. Porritt tries to see the good in the new. He has given us an entertaining hour of gossip about one region of the religious world in England during the past thirty years.

JAMES MOFFATT.

BIRDS IN POETRY.*

No one has a better right to ransack the treasuries of our English verse for bird-poems, to arrange and edit the fruits of his labours and publish the same with an introduction and notes of his own by way of the newest thing in anthologies, than a writer who has worked harder than any living man to save the rare and beautiful birds of the world from extinction at the hands of the money-grubber. Every bird-lover must know and admit that the man behind the recent Plumage Act was Mr. Harold Massingham and no other. Who, then, so fit for this very fascinating task? It must have been a labour of love, all this searching, filing, arranging, battling with the problems of what to throw out and what not to throw out, stretching a point to include this and steeling one's self to exclude that, for this is no haphazard anthology, as is plain from the compiler's survey of its scope and intentions in his Introduction. There were also, in the case of many modern poems, harassing copyright difficulties to contend with, though here Mr. Massingham makes grateful acknowledgment to such authors and publishers as have combined to smooth away his difficulties.

But all this trouble was very well worth taking. Everything here—and the range is from the Venerable Bede to W. H. Davies, Ralph Hodgson and Edmund Blunden—is good, and nearly everything about birds in English poetry that is really good seems to be here. You expect to find "It is the nightingale and not the lark," and here of course it is, and so is Keats's "Ode," and the anonymous "Sumer is icumen in," but William Wager's "I have a pretty titmouse, come begging on my toe" is refreshingly new, while another little-known example that stands out, especially by contrast with Mr. Hodgson's exquisite "Missel Thrush" and "Song of Honour," is a certain copy of verses of extraordinary satiric genius which must have made "the trade" furiously rage together when it first appeared in *The Nation*, the same author's "Hymn to Moloch," in which the prospect (mostly due to Mr. Massingham) of "best lines in Paradies" being left undisturbed in their tropic homes instead of adorning twenty-five guinea hats, to say nothing of:

> "Ospreys and ummins
> An other choice goods,
> Wastefully oppin
> About in the woods"—

is deplored by the "principal ouses engaged in the trade." Mr. J. C. Squire contributes a friendly preface, which would have been easier to read, if not necessarily more edifying, if its twelve pages had been set in roman type and not in italics.

A. G.

* "Poems About Birds." Chosen and Edited by H. J. Massingham. 10s. 6d. (Fisher Unwin.)

THE SACRED FLAME.*

"This book," says Mr. John Drinkwater in an introductory note to his new volume of poems, "is really one poem, and is a development of my sonnet sequence, 'Persuasion.'" On the title page he quotes the famous verse of Coleridge:

> "All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
> Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
> All are but ministers of love,
> And feed his sacred flame";

and he more clearly defines the scheme of which the present book forms a part in a sonnet entitled "Interlude," which he prints on the final page:

> "What love is; how I love; how builders' clay
> By love is lit into a golden spending;
> How love calls beautiful ghosts back to the day;
> How life because of love shall have no ending—
> These with the dawn I have begun to sing,
> These with the million-budded noon that's rising
> Shall be a theme, with love's consent, to bring
> My song to some imperishable devising . . ."

We take it, from this, that Mr. Drinkwater intends upon some large scale to celebrate love in all its manifold aspects, and that the volume before us represents indeed but a series of "preludes" to that larger music to come. How far the poet will succeed in this nobly-conceived enterprise remains to be seen. It may at least be said that "Preludes" contains the finest poetry that he has yet written.

* "Preludes: 1921–1922." By John Drinkwater. 3s. 6d. net. (Sidgwick & Jackson.)

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The book consists of four blank-verse narratives, with several lyrics intersprinkled. Nothing is more difficult than to refine pure gold, but Mr. Drinkwater has actually succeeded in giving fresh life and beauty to two of the best known stories of the Old Testament. In "David and Jonathan" he not only magnificently recreates for us the fight between the stripling and the giant, but, in showing us how that battle serves to reveal the minds of David and Jonathan one to the other, uniting them into one "perfect whole of purpose and compassion," he presents us with a deeply moving analysis of the love that comes of true understanding. In "The Maid of Naaman's Wife," he reveals, with equal power and grace and sympathy, the love whose name is pity. In sharp contrast is the story of two modern lovers whose love is passion that will not brook delay. Lake Winter, "a five hundred acre man," had been "born of love":

> "They had been lovers,
> Who made him, and no more, but they were lovers."

At length, after he has held his Sussex acres in fertility for fifteen years, he falls in love with Zen Dane, the wife of Martin Dane, a neighbouring farmer who, after a decade of wedded life, has come to regard his partner as "queer porcelain stuff beyond his knowing," while he has become for her "a half-forgotten habit." There is a dialogue in which Lake and Zen argue about the nature of love. Lake contends (though without much conviction) that in the mating of their minds they could enjoy a happiness and peace that physical union would only destroy—to which Zen replies:

> "I love you, and the thing I love is made
> All wonderful of flesh and spirit both,
> Body and mind inseparably one,
> And I must spend my love on all or nothing . . .
> And how should thought know thought until the whole
> Of body's beauty is by body learnt?
> Until the trial of that most dear seclusion
> Is past, and all the dangers of mere lust
> Disproved, when in possession is no stale
> Regret and disillusion, how should be known
> That the still hours of thought with thought are stable
> Against the wearing of dissolving time?"

Tragedy overtakes the lovers. Just when, in the absence of Farmer Dane, their passion is enjoying its illicit consummation, the house in which they are sleeping is struck by lightning, and both are killed. But for the poet a "whispered cadence" falls upon the night:

> "Again in the world a story has been made,
> These looked upon beauty unafraid,
> O these were lovely, these were the great ones, they dared
> And denied not, but upon love's bidding fared. . . .
>
> "Kindled for ever because of them shall be
> A wiser freedom. The long lanes of the sea,
> The golden acres of Sussex shall holy keep
> Their names, their love, their ending. Let them sleep."

This story, in spite of its many incidental beauties, will not please or convince all readers, and it will no doubt arouse controversy into which it is not our business to enter here. The last of the longer poems in the book—"Burning Bush"—celebrates the love of beauty and the love of earth, and shows how inextricably this love is interwoven with human love. Mr. Drinkwater has written nothing more tenderly idyllic.

GILBERT THOMAS.

SIR ALGERNON WEST.*

It was a happy thought of one who read these diaries in manuscript to describe the author as "a Greville with a warmer heart." There was little of the milk of human kindness in Greville, whereas Sir Algernon West counted all the world his friends. All the same, these entertaining diaries, as the editor suggests, will scarcely elevate our opinion of the views and purposes of eminent people. The by-ways of political life are not as a rule romantic. The forming of a Cabinet, the selection of the Household, the bestowal of honours, all too often have beneath them a rivulet of intrigue. This man will have that, the other will not accept this—the office of Prime Minister no doubt has its compensations: as presented here it would seem to involve endless trouble and worry about petty matters in addition to the legitimate anxieties about large issues.

This book is mainly an account of Gladstone's fourth administration, which endured from after the General Election of 1892 until February, 1894. Sir Algernon West, who was born in 1832, served his apprenticeship to affairs as private secretary to Sir Charles Wood and Lord Ripon at the India Office and to Gladstone in 1868 when he became Prime Minister. Since 1873 he had served in the Inland Revenue, of which he was Chairman from 1881 to 1892. In that year Gladstone, then eighty-three years of age, formed his fourth administration, and West, who had known him all his life, resigned from the Civil Service, and placed himself at the disposal of the Prime Minister as confidential private secretary. "There is one improvement you did not mention," Gladstone said to West one day after a conversation at Hawarden, "and that's the improvement of the Inland Revenue." A happy compliment, and well deserved.

Private secretaries are born, not made, and the ideal private secretary to a Prime Minister is about as rare as a first-class poet. West was such a one. A man of sixty, of ripe experience, who had all his days been behind the scenes, popular and tactful, he was probably the only man living who could do what he did to smooth the rugged path of the Grand Old Man in these years. Gladstone was not popular at Court. When Salisbury had resigned, the Queen had taken the unusual course of announcing in the *Court Circular* that she had received his resignation "with regret." She did not cause it to be announced that she accepted Gladstone's accession "with pleasure." She had indeed neither liking for nor sympathy with him. When told he was unwell, she expressed the opinion that he was "not really ill, but restless from want of excitement." Want of excitement! and he had in his Cabinet Harcourt, Rosebery, John Morley—warring elements. "Frequently," as the editor of this volume points out, "one or the other is seen very ready to start out, to kick over the traces, even at the risk of upsetting the coach. But the master hand and the habit of obedience restrained them, and we find Sir Algernon acting as a kind of conductor of the coach, running to their heads now and again, patting and coaxing them."

The troubles that beset West were only in degree less than those that confronted Gladstone. It was he who had always to act the peacemaker, trying to make one truculent member of the Cabinet see the point of others: endeavouring to find what in the political world of to-day is called a "formula" for agreement; while to soothe Gladstone himself was not the least of his tasks, for he at eighty, as at forty, was always "difficult," and required very careful handling. Gentle as West was as a rule, he could be firm when occasion demanded, and one day when Henry Gladstone told him not to mention some subject then to his father—"I fear," runs an entry in the diaries, "I was rather sharp and said my responsibility was great and I could not be dictated to by *all* the family."

The problems to be dealt with were of all kinds. The death of Tennyson in 1892 caused a vacancy in the Laureateship. The Prince of Wales and Arthur James Balfour were in favour of Swinburne, but his early revolutionary poems were an objection; Gladstone suggested Ruskin, who, as Spencer Lyttelton said, "is seventy-three, nearly out of his mind and never wrote a poem anybody ever read." Somebody suggested Dr. Bridges, and others William Morris and Lewis Morris. The Queen did not wish the office to be abolished, but as there appeared objections to everybody it was settled to let the matter stand over. When Tennyson was dying it was said that Alfred Austin wrote these touching lines:

> "And o'er the wire this baneful message came:
> 'He is no better, and is much the same.'"

* "Private Diaries of the Right Hon. Sir Algernon West, G.C.B." Edited by Horace G. Hutchinson. With Portrait. 18s. (John Murray.)

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On Lord Salisbury becoming Prime Minister, he selected Austin for the vacant post and, asked the reason for the appointment, replied cynically, "For the best possible reason, because he wanted it." Then there was the question of keeping the Prince of Wales aware of what was going on, and the Queen, always tenacious of her rights as Sovereign, while approving of the Prince of Wales being informed of the decisions of the Cabinet, "did not think that Mr. Gladstone's report should be repeated to H.R.H., as that is a confidential report from the Prime Minister to her alone." This matter was arranged by West drawing up a special memorandum for the Prince after each Cabinet meeting.

West shepherded his chief until his resignation, and there is an entry about the last Cabinet:

"Kimberley and Harcourt settled to say farewell on behalf of the members generally; both looked rather oppressed. Kimberley came into my room afterwards with tears rolling down his cheeks. He said it was most touching, and that Harcourt had broken down. Mr. Gladstone had been quite calm; said he was sorry for the differences of opinion that had arisen, but that in any case the time had come when his eyesight must force him to retire."

Thus, on March 1st, 1892, ended Gladstone's political career, and at the same time West, who had no further desire to continue his activities in this field, retired into private life. These diaries throw light on many vexed problems of men and matters, and no student of the period but must be grateful to Sir Algernon for having written them and to Mr. Hutchinson for having as ably edited them. The diaries, together with Sir Algernon West's "Recollections," published some years ago, are a valuable contribution to history.

LEWIS MELVILLE.

FAR-OFF THINGS.*

I was about to tell Mr. Machen that, let him but write, on what subject soever he will, there are always those—and the number of them steadily increases—who cannot choose but read him. I was about to tell him this, but decided to let it pass, because of a feeling that it is somewhat late in the day for such assurances. In this presumptuous literary age, one need pray not to be led into committing new sins of presumption.

Notwithstanding Mr. Machen's modest disavowal, implicit always, and explicit where "I recognise . . . that I was, very decidedly, not born a poet," none but a poet could have written this book (and here none but a fool or a futurist will cry for definitions). Not born a poet perhaps, but born in Caerleon-on-Usk in the heart of Gwent, an enchanted land "that is golden for ever and immortal in the romances of King Arthur and the Grail and the Round Table." It was in the nature of things therefore that his writings, since a writer he was to be, should be instinct with poetry.

The game of life in these days is more than ever an affair of rough-and-tumble, and in the too few and too brief intervals of quietude vouchsafed us it is good for our souls when we can sit down to a book such as this fragment of autobiography, healing and consoling. There is no noise in it, no yawp, nor on the other hand does it contain any "moral" or "purpose" that one is made aware of. It is intensely interesting and fuller of romance than scores of novels, and of adventures—though not of the kind that fell, say, to the Count of Monte Cristo.

The hills and valleys and streams of Gwent are conjured before our eyes, and we come to know the place as it was and the people in their habit as they lived in the sixties and seventies of the last century. We are made free of Llanddewi Rectory—Llanddewi in the woods—our author's old home, with its delightfully miscellaneous collection of books, "yellow-backs" and Elzevirs, Mr. Verdant Green in paper wrappers, Borrow in the original boards (they were Borrovian at Llanddewi before the Borrovians), the Brontës, *Chambers's Journal* and *The Welcome Guest*, Llanddewi knew not the "Arabian Nights," but Scott was there to weave his wizard spell. And Mr. Machen turns to ask, "What is vital literature?" A difficult question to answer; but Sir Walter Scott's tales, with all their faults, are vital literature, and "vital literature is something as remote as you can possibly imagine from the short stories of the late Guy de Maupassant."

At Pontypool Road Station the boy Machen one day bought a copy of De Quincey's "Opium-Eater," which he instantly loved, and still loves very heartily. His comments on the modern critics who subtly "desire to run down De Quincey" give me great joy. "The critic is afraid to make a frontal attack . . . since he knows that he will be opposed by such splendours and such terrors—an army with banners—as the English language can scarce show elsewhere." How true! "And our critics are advised also that De Quincey was no mere player of clever tricks with the language. . . . He wrote in the great manner because he thought in the great manner." How very true! I want to follow with a blow in the same good cause myself, but—another time!

At last, in June, 1880, came the great adventure of London, and "for the first time I saw the Strand. . . . I walked up Surrey Street and stood on the Strand pavement and looked before me and to right and to left and gasped. No man has ever seen London; but at that moment I was very near to the vision—the *theoria*—of London." Follow lean years in London lodgings, years during which an apprenticeship of sorts was served to Letters. It was London of the eighties, remember, and our apprentice a lad newly come out of Avalon; *verbum sapienti sat est*. Then, in 1884, the call of the West rose insistent; and it was summer. And so—to Caerleon once more, to Caerleon-on-Usk which was Avalon. "And every herb of the fields and all the leaves of the wood, and the waters of all wells and streams were appointed for my healing." For Babylon is a maker of scars!

F. C. OWLETT.

* "Far-Off Things." By Arthur Machen. 7s. 6d. (Secker.

DANTE AND HIS CRITICS.

The so-called "mysticism" of Dante has always presented a tough Œdipus-like conundrum to the vast battalion of critics and commentators who literally swarm in the cocoon of the "Divine Comedy." Dante is really far less complex than his disciples who are still splitting their, and others', heads over the meaning of this or that "obscure" passage, while the poem as a whole stands as firmly outlined as a Gothic cathedral. One is reminded in this literary tussle between the Guelfs and Ghibellines of Dante criticism of the fierce controversies that used to rage between the schoolmen of the Middle Ages who all but came to blows in their endless wrangles as to the number of angels who could conveniently stand on the point of a needle! Not thus is Apollo served. These industrious brooms merely succeed in brushing away the shining dew-drops that cling to the fine texture of the immortal trilogy and leave mere cobwebs behind for the brooms of other laborious commentators.

Dante's philosophy of "mysticism" is not new; nor is it a product of mediæval Italy. It came immemorially from the East by way of Greece, and all that Dante so divinely taught was simply the old immortal truths of Pythagoras and Plato, caught up later in the philosophical network of Spinoza, Kant and Hegel. Dante impressed his own sombre personality on this ancient wisdom and gave a rhyme to Plato, who, with Aristotle, was one of his early teachers. Perhaps, like Plato, he too had other secret mentors who taught him the opening story of the Trinity in Unity.

A profound and sensible Dante critic like Signor Benedetto Croce[1] steers clear of these pitfalls, and is content to

[1] "The Poetry of Dante." By Benedetto Croce. 10s. 6d. (Allen & Unwin.)

From MRS. LOVAT FRASER'S Translation of GOLDONI'S "THE LIAR"
(Selwyn & Blount).

THE MASK
(By C. Lovat Fraser)

XUM

From "ARTHUR MEE'S GOLDEN YEAR"
(Hodder & Stoughton).

"CALM AND UNAFRAID PLINY GOES TO HIS BATH."

From "THE CHINESE THEATRE."
By CHU-CHIA-CHIEN.
Translated by JAMES A. GRAHAM.
Illustrated by ALEXANDRE JACOVLEFF
(John Lane).

ACTRESS IN THE PART OF AN ACCUSED WOMAN BEFORE THE TRIBUNAL.

XUM

From "MY LIFE AND SOME LETTERS."
By MRS. PATRICK CAMPBELL
(Hutchinson).

BEATRICE STELLA CAMPBELL, 1914.

give us the real quintessence of Dante's poetry, and philosophy too for that matter, in a well-knit, scholarly analysis, without mysterious probings. The author of "The Poetry of Dante" has given us one of the best critical studies on the subject, and one which we feel is destined to take prominent place in Dante literature.

Dr. Wilkins's study[2] is less elaborate. It is a thesis on the apostolic and even Messianic attributes of the poet and within its narrow limits one of the most fascinating studies we have read. This side of Dante deserves to be emphasised, particularly in these days when war and the rumour of war is still in our ears. The incomparable singer of love and the panegyrist of the cardinal virtues was also a great political idealist who outlined his theories of a world federation in the *Convivio*:

"Wherefore," he says, "in order to do away with these wars and their causes, it is necessary that the whole earth and all that is given to the race of man to possess, should be a monarchy, that is to say a single princedom; and should have a single prince, who possessing all things and having nothing left to desire, may keep the kings confined within the borders of their kingdoms, so that peace may reign between them; in which peace the cities may have rest; in which rest the neighbourhoods may love each other; in which love the households may satisfy all their wants; and when these are satisfied man may attain joy, which is the end whereunto man was born."

Thus is Dante not merely the ardent disciple of Plato, but a real precursor of the League of Nations!

This aspect of Dante is also dealt with by Dr. Lonsdale Ragg[3] whose contribution to the literature of the poet is a veritable encyclopædia and mine of information. The author of "Dante Alighieri: Apostle of Freedom" touches the matter more familiarly than either Signor Croce who, like his master, is severe to austerity, or Dr. Wilkins who is less discursive and is anxious to say as much as possible (and he has certainly said a great deal) in the smallest possible space. Still, we see Dante here as he is and will be immortally—one of the noblest and most tragic figures in history. Dr. Ragg, too, is attracted to the political idealist and thus eloquently sums up the character of the sad Florentine:

"Purity of purpose, sincerity in speech and conduct, *sancta simplicitas*—ready to cast away earthly privilege, to face joyfully the call of 'low living and high thinking' and to find freedom in fewness of material possessions and richness of moral and spiritual endowment—that is the temper eagerly embraced by Francis and his followers, loyally accepted by Dante, exile and pilgrim, and it is the only temper which can adapt itself to live happily in a denuded world: the temper which, when saturated with the passion of loving service, as was that of 'Christ's Poor Man,' may hope, Franciscan-wise, to heal the world's wounds, to assuage its quarrels and to build up better and more strongly that which has been broken down."

This, after all, was the real spirit of Dante.

Mr. Philip H. Wicksteed[4] follows the severely critical method of Signor Croce and his two comprehensive essays form a clear and at the same time profound study of the vital relations between Dante's various works and give an admirable and exhaustive epitome of the poet's philosophical system. While Mr. Wicksteed is deeply analytical and writes with the knowledge of a scholar he has the enthusiasm of a romantic for his subject. We can imagine no better or more authoritative guide in the difficult maze of Dante literature.

Madame dé Lucchi's[5] excellent "Anthology of Italian Poems" deserves high praise, not only on account of the comprehensive scope of the book, which ranges from St. Francis of Assisi to Carducci, but because of the admirable quality of her translations.

ROBERT BIRKMYRE.

[2] "Dante: Poet and Apostle." By Ernest H. Wilkins. $1.25. (University of Chicago.)

[3] "Dante Alighieri: Apostle of Freedom." By Lonsdale Ragg, B.D. 6s. (Stockwell.)

[4] "From Vita Nuova to Paradiso." By Philip H. Wicksteed, M.A. 5s. (University Press, Manchester.)

[5] "An Anthology of Italian Poems." By Lorna dé Lucchi. 10s. 6d. (Heinemann.)

DIVERSIONS OF A BOOK-COLLECTOR.*

There is no need to tell any who have read "The Amenities of Book Collecting" that Mr. A. Edward Newton, though second to none as an enthusiastic collector of books, is even more keenly interested in the men who write them.

Mr. A. Edward Newton.

Nor are his interests bounded by the library; when he goes hunting after rare books or prints he finds all manner of pleasures by the way, and has a way of so telling you about them that he makes his pleasures yours. "I am no writer," he told me once; "I can't invent things—I can only sit down and write, as one might write a letter, about what I have been doing myself, or what I have seen and known." After all, much of the best writing has been done like that; and you will go a long way before you find a more gossipy, discursive, genial, thoroughly entertaining volume than "A Magnificent Farce, and Other Diversions of a Book Collector." He calls his introductory essay "Purely Personal," but the whole book is that, and the revelation of a personality as shrewdly sagacious as it is delightfully whimsical.

Mr. Newton happens to live in Pennsylvania at Daylesford, which is named after the Welsh village where Warren Hastings was born. This seems to have interested him in Warren Hastings, and has resulted in his writing "The Magnificent Farce," the story of Hastings and the famous trial, drawn from books and illustrated with a title page, prints, and a ticket of admission to the trial which you may depend are in his collection. Then he tells you how he came to write books, which involves some talk of book-buying, his relations with divers persons, famous and otherwise, and his opinions on certain current affairs. In an essay on luck he gossips of the lucky chances that brought some of his most valued books into his possession—but nearly all the way through he is talking of his books, and talk of them leads him into talk of their authors, of places associated with them and anecdotes about them. Blake and Whitman have whole chapters, and admirable chapters, too, all to themselves. Mr. Newton is a wholehearted lover of London and in one chapter relates how, breaking his leg in a street accident, he spent some of the happiest weeks of his life as "No. 20" in a ward of Bartholomew's Hospital; and in another, "My Old Lady, London," relates some of his London ramblings and, incidentally, how he met a stranger in a bookshop, and was invited to go and see the book-collection of that stranger, who turned out to be Mr. John Burns. Anyone who cares anything for books will revel in "A Magnificent Farce"; it shows book-collecting to be no mere academic toil, but an intensely interesting and healthfully human pastime. The volume is enriched with over seventy facsimiles of manuscripts and title pages, portraits, scarce prints, sketches and photographs, and several beautifully reproduced drawings and engravings by Blake.

S. J.

* "A Magnificent Farce, and Other Diversions of a Book Collector." By A. Edward Newton. 25s. (Putnams.)

XUM

PRIBBLES AND PRABBLES.*

Ought one to congratulate Mr. Lucas on his fluency of expression? Evidently he has only to put pen to paper and the creature runs its course, with never a stumble or a line to blot, until the process comes to an end at the ultimate full-stop!

Twice in this little book of characteristic essays and of what he calls fantasies, of pribbles and of prabbles, of sketches and the eloquent expression of not-very-much, he touches notes which move. The simple account of the release of the caged goldfinch in Fiume, and the brilliant and, for him, strangely reticent description of the bull fight, entitled, "Whenever I see a Grey Horse . . ." are heart warming; but such passing aspects of human-kindness serve only to show the fluent paucity of pretty well all else in the book. If only Mr. Lucas had to fight for his words; if only the phrases would not so readily come to him and he must sleep on them and battle with them; if only he could feel sometimes a little discontented with the turn of an expression and endeavour to find the jewelled phrase! He might then make his many little books, of which this is a very fair example, a joy and stimulation to go back to.

Obviously, he writes too easily and far too much. His range of subjects, though nominally infinite, is, in fact, limited; and he is too willing to spin words over any old thing. It is easy—and surely not unjust—to imagine him, when the hundredth editor in a week has implored him for a brief prose something to gladden a picture page, looking about his room or cudgelling his memory, with despair in his eyes. "I've written about that stool and that table-leg, that chair and—yes, Aunt Maria's warming-pan. That will do!" The pen is given its fill of ink and is launched forthwith on the new voyage of the thousand words, while Mr. Lucas's brow remains unruffled and unwrinkled through any anguish or depth of thought. And so, in some such manner as is suggested, we are given the little sketch, called "Reunion," of the copper warming-pan, a disused relic, after years of solitude and uselessness meeting the bedpost it had consorted with in the brave days of old. Somehow, Gilbert's analogous ballad of the magnet and the silver churn has a deal more point and humour and purpose about it.

Mr. Lucas, who is to be numbered with our humorists as he writes for *Punch*, is at his funniest when borrowing the unconscious humour of others. His extracts from the Italian conversation-manual are amusing. How to pronounce our peculiar tongue with its exceptions and contradictions in a cultured manner—"Uithaut Riligiòn ui sciùd bi uòrs then bîsts," and "Impôlait-nès is disgòstin." So, too, with the Babu's guide to cricket, published in 1891. "If you are the captain of your team and the fielders of the opposite party clap your welcome, you are required simply to turn or raise your nightcap a little, and this is sufficient to prove your easy turn of disposition as well as to furnish the return of their compliments." Mr. Lucas's reflections on these principles of deportment and morality, apart from their humour, are extremely good for us—and especially for reviewers.

He has rather handicapped himself through his occasional extracts from "Elia" and the implied comparisons. The most ambitious essay in this book, on "The Evolution of Whimsicality"—though whimsicality, as he confesses, is not quite what he means—gives him an opportunity for quoting the letters of Charles Lamb. The difference suggested is too hazardous. If in return for some of his gift of easy expression, Mr. Lucas could have some of the whimsicality, originality and humanity of that belovedest person in literature, what a joy his papers would be! It is, however, no use to spend despair over the inevitable. We must take Mr. Lucas as we find him, and we have reason to be grateful to him not only for the examples of humanity to animals, referred to earlier, but for the fact that here is an example of the ideal bedside book. His qualities and deficiencies provide the very thing for the sleepless and for those who enjoy a literary "night-cap." He does not fret the mind; he does not set the brain moving in that tireless mechanical action which gives the impulse they need to the hags of insomnia. No! You read and in the genial flow, the happy flow, the easy flow of ever-kindly prose, you slip—slip away into velvet slumber. I know. I have tried it, and it worked. So "E. V. L."—thank you!

C. E. LAWRENCE.

* "Giving and Receiving." Essays and Fantasies. By E. V. Lucas. 6s. (Methuen.)

TABLE TALK OF LEWIS HIND.*

The most popular kind of literary criticism is gossip. We have this at its best in Anatole France, and at its worst in the *causeries* of some English newspapers which are obviously written by office-boys.

Mr. Lewis Hind knows a great deal about books and their creators, and such a volume as "More Authors and I" has a value rather historical than critical since it recalls certain writers who are seemingly forgotten by Georgian readers. His impressions, too, of all kinds and conditions of people in the world of letters have the virtues of tolerance and gaiety. One realises in these little talks about authors why Mr. Hind made such an admirable editor of *The Academy*. His tastes are very catholic and very agreeable, and he is swayed much more by sentiment than by cynicism. That sentiment plunges him occasionally into strange depths of saccharinity. It is distressing to come on an appreciation of Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett, which contains the following passage:

> "And 'Little Lord Fauntleroy'? I must have read it half a dozen times. I read it again yesterday, and the lump rose once more to the throat, and the mist once more to the eyes. . . . 'Little Lord Fauntleroy' in book and play has fluttered into a myriad of hearts. So has 'Editha's Burglar,' again the theme of Innocence conquering through the simple art of being true and fearless."

One might have imagined this to come from the pen of Mr. James Douglas in an unusually lachrymose and bathetic mood. It is seldom that Mr. Hind descends to such depths, and in pointing out his sin, I keep in remembrance the case of Ruskin who said enthusiastic things about "Bootle's Baby."

Against the lapse there are many instances of measured judgment, as in his estimates of John Davidson and Harold Frederick. I had feared that Davidson was forgotten, but Hind tells of a district library in Manchester where the "Selected Poems" have been issued forty-nine times since 1911—which is fame for Manchester. As an illustration of Hind's gossipy method, this impression of the author of "In the Valley" is a fairly typical one:

> "When I entered the room Harold Frederick was seated at the piano singing folk-songs and negro spirituals. He was having refreshments at the same time; the cup was on the candle-stand, and a piece of bread-and-butter and a piece of cake were on his knee. The crumbs of each decorated his waistcoat."

It is Hind's acute journalistic sense that makes him view people like that; and it certainly has the effect of making them more real, if a little lacking in dignity. The note on Harold Frederick is valuable, if only for its word of praise for that extraordinarily witty and original little book, "March Hares."

It is twelve years now since Morley Roberts wrote "The Private Life of Henry Maitland," which was, in fictional form, the life of his unfortunate friend, George Gissing. Hind has some wonderfully interesting things to say about this and about George Gissing generally. From "By the Ionian Sea" he quotes with felicity the valediction of an unhappy spirit who saw some of the glory of the world and sadly enjoyed a measure of happiness before he died at St. Jean de Luz on December 28th, 1903:

> "Alone and quiet, I heard the washing of the waves; I saw the evening fall on cloud-wreathed Etna, the twinkling lights come forth upon Scylla and Charybdis; and as I looked my last towards the Ionian Sea, I wished it were mine to wander endlessly amid the silence of the ancient world, to-day and all its sounds forgotten."

* "More Authors and I." By C. Lewis Hind. 7s. 6d. (The Bodley Head.)

There was always a kind of dog-in-the-manger spirit about Gissing except in that serene and kindly book, "The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft," which is the testament of a pessimist reconciled to life by means of a few hundred pounds.

Years ago I used to meet Lionel Johnson in the Strand in a certain Irish house of entertainment where he sat on the top of a high stool drinking the local nectar and talking gravely of literature. Hind's reminiscences of him as a contributor to *The Academy* are happy glimpses of a curiously retiring personality.

A very true and cordial estimate is that of George Warrington Steevens, the very greatest of literary journalists, not even excepting Kipling. Fittingly he quotes Henley's tribute: "To realise George Steevens you must put away everything but simplicity, kindness, sincerity."

Ford Madox Hueffer is not treated with that reverence with which Ford Madox Hueffer treats himself, but Hind has the journalist's faculty of penetrating through pomp. He has obviously an affectionate contempt for his pontifical subject:

"Years ago when I was staying at Winchelsea I told a lady I was about to spend the evening at the Hueffers'. 'Don't praise Fordie to his face,' she said. 'It's not good for him.' In the course of the evening someone sang what I thought was an Elizabethan song very beautifully. I was so charmed with the performance that I begged for a repetition. This was done, and I said, with some emotion, and not without pride in my perspicacity, 'What a combination—Shakespeare and Purcell. We can do nothing like that nowadays.'

"Fordie, who had been lying on a couch, suppressed a yawn and said, 'I wrote the words and the music.'"

More enthusiasm is displayed for Cunninghame-Graham, and Hind implores him for an autobiography, while remarking: "He may be the best horseman in the British Isles; he is certainly the worst calligraphist."

Some of the authors dealt with are American: Hind is strangely at home with them. I gather from him that George Ade has a simple and easy way of making a successful after-dinner speech. If the laugh does not come immediately he reaches a full point, he pauses the fraction of a second very confidently. The laugh always follows.

It is worth trying.

LOUIS J. MCQUILLAND.

"KNUCKLES AND GLOVES."*

"I am sorry that prize-fighting is gone out," said Dr. Johnson to Boswell one Sunday evening in the autumn of 1773, "every art should be preserved, and the art of defence is surely important. . . . Prize-fighting made people accustomed not to be alarmed at seeing their own blood, or feeling a little pain from a wound." This opinion, expressed by one who knew something about boxing and had been taught the art by an uncle who kept the ring at Smithfield, was amplified and philosophised by Johnson eighteen months later. "It is more disgraceful," he said, "not to fight than to fight and to be beaten. . . . Courage, you know, Sir, is reckoned the greatest of all virtues; because, unless a man has that virtue, he has no security for guarding any other."

As I read through Mr. Bohun Lynch's stories of battles with "Knuckles and Gloves," I thought more than once of the Doctor's dictum; for among them are to be found many a tale of a combatant fighting gamely on round after round after having an arm broken, a thumb smashed, knuckles peeled, or one or both eyes bunged up. The pluck of Jem Belcher, of Tom Cribb, of Tom Hickman, and of Tom Sayers is rightly insisted on by Mr. Lynch who, himself a well-known amateur middle-weight boxer who has sparred with Bob Fitzsimmons, wields, strangely enough, a much fresher and more picturesque style when he is reviving for us the glories of the old prize-ring than when he is describing modern glove-fights, at many of which he must have been an actual spectator. Probably the less scientific boxing of the knuckles era lends itself more happily to picturesque reporting. In days when there was no qualification of the champion's title, no middle, welter, feather, bantam, fly, or paper-weight; when men went into the ring practically untrained and often after indulging in prolonged debauches of hard drinking; when a fighter was at liberty to throw his opponent to the ground, to lean upon him, to fall upon him, to clutch him by the hair, and, most important point of difference between old style and new, to drop down to dodge his blow; when the seconds tried to revive their man by biting his ears, by tweaking his nose and by dosing him with brandy; when the combatants and their supporters had to fly from county to county to evade the emissaries of the law and when the sporting riff-raff often broke through in an attempt to interfere with the fight—in those days there was undoubtedly more excitement and romance about a bout of fisticuffs than there is to-day when boxing, as Mr. Lynch puts it, has become "Cochranised."

Mr. Lynch knows his Pierce Egan; indeed, he seems to have quite an intimate knowledge of the literature of boxing, from Egan, *Bell's Life*, Hazlitt and Byron to Borrow, Thackeray, Conan Doyle and Bernard Shaw. But, as I have said already, he is better as a chronicler than as a reporter. So when he passes from knuckle encounters to glove contests he is more at ease in describing a fight which he cannot have seen, such as that between Frank Slavin and Peter Jackson or that in which the second Jack Dempsey defeated Georges Carpentier, than he is in depicting those fights of Bombardier Wells at which he was probably present. He is a good reporter, that is to say; but he happens to be a first-rate chronicler. It is a pity he does not indulge oftener in generalisations. What he says on the nigger as boxer is admirable, and his analysis of the "defeatist" elements in Wells's temperament is brilliant if not quite exhaustive; but, à propos of Daniel Mendoza, he might have given us an appreciation of Jews as principals, promoters and spectators of a fight. Having, however, derived a good deal of enjoyment out of his book, I must not quarrel with Mr. Lynch at the very end of my notice; for no one interested in the old prize-ring and in modern boxing ought to miss making acquaintance with "Knuckles and Gloves."

LEWIS BETTANY.

* "Knuckles and Gloves." By Bohun Lynch. 15s. (Collins.)

LEONARD MERRICK'S STORIES.*

On the cover of Leonard Merrick's new collection of stories, "To Tell You the Truth," there is a pot of pansies. It symbolises one aspect of his work in its charm and fragrance. Of course, in addition to that, he has more worldly gifts. He is the cleanest of our realists, the most compassionate of our cynics. The tragedy and the gaiety of the Merrick story are one and the same in the impression they leave on the heart. He is one of the very minute body of writers whose tenderness never coarsens into sentimentality.

What that band of brothers and sisters, the lovers of Leonard Merrick, will relish most in his new volume is "The Statue." In the Square d'Iona, there was the bust of a great French poet overlooked by the statue of a beautiful woman who read his works. Gabys Dupuy, a good creature, who had little care for poetry, had sat for this in her youth. A certain young poetaster, who loved the dead poet, fell in love with the statue of the woman. He came to Gaby, full of rapture, and she, poor woman, welcomed him, but when he looked on her he became cool and aloof. I told you that Gabys had aged. He wanted to see her ever youthful. The young demand impossibilities.

A beautiful heart-breaking little story is "Picq Plays the Hero," in which a shabby actor performs at last well, while his wife is dying and he dare not display grief. Leonard Merrick may have done better things than this volume; but this is good enough for the best of us. L. J. M.

* "To Tell You the Truth." By Leonard Merrick. 7s. 6d. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

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THE HOUR OF MAGIC.*

Mr. Davies's new volume, with cover and designs by Mr. W. Nicholson, is a thing of pure beauty, and the conjunction of poet and artist has seldom been so happily justified.

"This is the hour of magic, when the Moon
With her bright wand has charmed the tallest tree
To stand stone still with all her million leaves."

The hour of magic—that Mr. Davies should be able to seize it, prolong its brief natural passage, and distil an undecaying flavour from everything on which his inward eye falls, is a theme for renewed gratitude. This, the latest of his many volumes, gives proof that the purity of his melody is not lost, and the crystal brightness of his world is still unstained—is indeed as finely revealed as ever, by means of his continual yet all but imperceptible approaches to technical perfection. It is but by growth in that difficult perfection that an uninstructed but acute reader might distinguish the later from the earlier work. Purity of outline, freshness of sense, strength and delicacy of touch, Mr. Davies's verse has always shown; and time, that diminishes so many gifts in others, has but led him to the surer and easier management of his simplicities.

"The night breeds many a thing that's strange:
The wretched owl that in distress
Hoots every star that comes to help
The evening in her loveliness;
The half-blind bats that here and there
Are floundering in the twilight air . . ."

This is from "The Trance," the longest piece in the book, and although it is not equally magical throughout (for Mr. Davies is at his best in short things), the whole poem is lit by astonishing beauties. A thief comes to rob the tranced lady:

"When, by his lamp, in that dark place,
He saw the jewels there,
Shaking with life, and greedy, where
They nibbled at the small, gold bands
On her cold, lifeless hands . . ."

Donne himself, with his famous "bracelet of bright hair about the bone," would not disdain that. Nor does Mr. Davies trouble to avoid a direct debt, for the following:

"Three things there are more beautiful
Than any man could wish to see:
The first, it is a full-rigged ship
Sailing with all her sails set free;
The second, when the wind and sun
Are playing in a field of corn;
The third, a woman young and fair,
Showing her child before it is born,"—

is his verse-robe for a "triad," heard by Dr. Joyce in his youth among the people of Limerick, and cited by the late Kuno Meyer. It would be interesting to know whether Mr. Davies heard this among the people of his native Wales in *his* youth.

"The Hour of Magic" illustrates yet again the truth that lyrical poetry is not essentially an intellectual but a spiritual expression; that the lyric is exalted not by reason of intellectual qualities in the poet, but by reason of that transcendent and transforming faculty which we call imagination to distinguish it from conscious and deliberate invention. There has seldom been a lyric poet whose best work has been more purely *poetry* than that of Mr. Davies. Alien anxieties, intruders from the moral and social spheres, are scarcely ever to be found in his verse; the only intrusion is that of a curious, innocent realism which strays in at times from the street of memory, not from the forest of imagination.

"Now, Mary Price is seventy-five,
And skinning eels alive:
She, active, strong, and full of breath,
Has caught the cat that stole an eel,
And beaten it to death."

He is never afraid to confront grave things that are living things; the simplest and deepest concerns of human life—love and death—are his concern. But death is not his burden, and love is the delight of his Muse. The day comes when the verse that expresses a philosophy is forgotten with the philosophy and discovered only by gravediggers who open the ground for another corpse; when the verse that arouses national passions is contemned because those passions are no longer sore; when the verse that displays current moods in the manner of the moment is passed by. But the poetry of Mr. Davies is serene and untouched. It is of the kind that the wise man was recalling, when he said that so long as he had the making of a people's songs he cared not who made its laws.

JOHN FREEMAN.

* "The Hour of Magic, and Other Poems." By W. H. Davies. Decorated by William Nicholson. 7s. 6d. (Jonathan Cape.)

MEDIEVAL FRANCE.*

"Medieval France" is a volume of extreme interest and of enduring value. It is concerned with the activities of France in many varying phases from the tenth to the close of the fifteenth century, and has just been completed, I notice, by the issue of a companion volume treating of the development of modern France till present times. Under the competent editorship of Mr. Arthur Tilley a group of scholars, mainly French, has endeavoured to present to the English reader, within a moderate compass, a conspectus of the history, literature and art of mediæval France. The scope of the work may be indicated shortly as follows. An initial chapter on Geography serves as a background both to this and to the volume designed as its complement. It is followed by the longest and most searching portion of the book—that dealing with the history of the country from the accession of Hugh Capet to Charles VIII. This section is by that eminent scholar M. Charles V. Langlois, a specialist in many mediæval subjects, and is a thoroughly solid and conscientious piece of work. To this succeeds subsidiary studies of the Army and Navy of the period; a section on Industry and Commerce; another on Language and Dialects; and a very informing article on Literature by M. Lucien Foulet, deserving of more detailed treatment than can be afforded here. Three English writers are responsible for the chapters on Scholastic Philosophy; Architecture; and Sculpture, Glass, Painting; and it is pleasant to recognise that theirs is not the least learned and interesting portion of the book.

It will be noticed from the above summary that the modern fashion of presenting history has been adopted by the distinguished editor. It is the fashion made familiar to us by Lavisse's monumental "Histoire de France," as also by certain of our own Cambridge Histories. Very possibly it is the only way of dealing with the mass of material now painfully accumulated. A group of experts is engaged, under the direction of one controlling intelligence, to deal with certain particular provinces of which the writer has peculiar knowledge. This method of collaboration has many excellent points. It stands unrivalled in turning out a useful tool, and if a book were only a tool there would be nothing more to say. The disadvantages of the method are that any book so produced almost necessarily loses in unity, and, even worse, from the artistic point of view can never vie with work fused into a coherent whole by the convictions and enthusiasms of a single personality. And "Medieval France" has not convinced me that my predilection is tasteless, as well as out of date.

When we consider the disturbed and painful conditions prevailing in France during a considerable portion of her early history, we must marvel at the genius, the devotion, and the indomitable pluck which enabled her art and letters to flourish so miraculously. "It is incredible what a great people can bear without causing the creative power within it to falter." In the art of architecture mediæval France found its most characteristic expression, and the supreme period of the Gothic may be said to culminate in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In one reign alone

* "Medieval France." A Companion to "French Studies." Edited by Arthur Tilley. 25s. (Cambridge University Press.)

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sixteen cathedrals were building, including Chartres, Amiens and Rheims, the very apotheosis of that school. The most highly wrought of the sculpture which crowded the porches of these incomparable Houses of Prayer was of the same period; whilst the rainbows of storied glass, filling them with jewelled darkness, was of the thirteenth century. Though the literature of mediæval France can scarcely be considered to rival its architecture, no reader of M. Foulet's essay can remain in doubt of its essential greatness. The whole land was as thick with legends and stories as a bush with berries. An immense number of these have been recovered from the wreckage of the labour of *trouvère* and *jongleur*, but a large number are irretrievably lost, to our great misfortune. Of this early literature M. Foulet sees three of the principal peaks in "The Song of Roland," "Aucassin and Nicolette" and Joinville's "History of St. Louis." Of these the lovely cante-fable survived by the lucky accident of a single copy; whilst the epic was only discovered last century, at the Bodleian, in a minstrel's working copy, thumbed with use and dirty from long carrying in the wallet. "The Song of Roland," "bleak, gaunt, majestic," is indeed the dominating piece of literature of mediæval France, and is truly comparable with a severe example of French Gothic—Chartres for instance. M. Foulet's remarks on this masterpiece are frequently admirable, but is he really accurate in appearing to imply that Roland waited till he was alone and about to die before he would sound his horn? Surely Oliver was alive, and Turpin also, when first that horn was blown.

To all students of the Middle Ages in France this book should prove the best tool "punched" for English readers for a very considerable time.

EUGENE MASON.

SHEER AUDACITY.*

The knowledge beforehand of what you are to expect more or less from a given novel is of course only an intensification of feeling for or against, and everything still depends on one's memory of prior experience. But in "Sapper's" case there need be no alarm. His Bull-Dog Drummond has entered permanently into the category of those unpretentious heroes that mankind has taken to its rough-and-ready bosom. He has more than any possible rival the right combination of unsophisticated talk and highly concentrated action, and in this respect he is virtually the sublimation of those qualities which the war brought out in the best of our officers and men. Hugh Drummond, in fact, is as much a child of the war as "Old Bill," and fundamentally for much the same reasons. He has the power of letting you laugh at him just as long as he likes and then turning the grin upon his enemies. The fact that they are also yours gives the reader just that snug sense of comfort which is indefinable and incomparable, unless one compares it to the feeling that some shrewd woman described as adding a satisfaction even to virtue—the consciousness of being well dressed.

One wonders who is likely to get the more enjoyment out of this gusty and breathless novel—the impressionable young soul who takes it in earnest or the practised reader of fiction who perceives that the author is using incidents merely as illustrations of the peculiar and extensive qualities he desires to bring out in his hero. Sometimes as you watch "B.D.D." emerge from impossible scrapes and crucial trials, you feel something like the old lady who sent solemn word to Dean Swift that there were things in his "Gulliver" that "she could positively not believe." But "B.D.D." does not seem to care a fig if you believe in him or not. All that happens or matters is that you read on to the finish. By that time you learn how Hugh and Phyllis, after a succession of quite inextricable chapters, land themselves into as tight a "wad" of trouble as ever was contrived—a manor in the wilds of Essex which is simply a double-dyed Inquisition of "hextra power," crammed with cosmopolitan villainy and loaded weapons at full cock, and walled round with a barricade of electrocution which tosses off its victims as a fountain scatters spray. The toss decides it, and "B.D.D." flings Phyllis over the deadly peril, only to land her into a motor full of their persecutors who bring her back and promptly hold on them both a tribunal of death. If ever Mr. and Mrs. Bull-Dog seemed consigned to recumbent positions under the daisies, it was then, and yet they emerge by means of the remedy named in the title. It is one of the most audacious bits of invention one remembers in the annals of fiction, and we cry, like Oliver, for more.

J. P. C.

* "The Black Gang." By "Sapper" (H. C. McNeile). 7s. 6d. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

STANLEY WEYMAN'S BEST.*

There are still among us a few people—a very few—who can tell stories from personal experience of the coaching days, the earliest years of "the steam railway" and the life of England as it was then lived. They are in the eighties and nineties, and soon they will have passed on Mr. Weyman's new book is the story, we might say, of an active and alert great-grandfather who remembers every incident, who can give the old scenes their proper proportion and whose mind remains unconfused by the speeding up, the "efficiency" propaganda, the general freedom of the twentieth century.

It is, without any reservation at all, a masterly work. "Ovington's," the pivot upon which most of the events recorded revolve, is one of the banks of a country town, Ovington himself being accessible to his customers, an oracle to be consulted on all matters of finance. The note of the period is given by the opening scene, where the "county" and "trade"—sharply distinguished as never since—meet in the bank parlour to discuss the formation of "The Valleys Steam Railroad Company" for the purpose of connecting the woollen business of the Valleys with the town, "and of providing the public with a superior mode of transport." The banker puts the case:

> "The Stockton and Darlington Railway is proving what can be done by steam in the transport of the heaviest goods. There a single engine draws a load of fifty tons at the rate of six miles an hour, and has been known to convey a load of passengers at fifteen miles. Higher speeds are thought to be possible——"
>
> "I'll never believe it!" Wolley growled, anxious to assert himself.
>
> "But not desirable," Ovington continued blandly.

There was a "boom" in trade; new enterprises were being floated on every hand, and the banks were in it up to the neck. Reaction followed; many banks closed their doors, and Ovington's was only saved at the eleventh hour by a very narrow margin—a matter of a few hundreds. The account of the run on the bank by its crowds of frightened clients—not an affair of a few hours, but of many days of lingering suspense—and the manner in which failure was averted, is far too fine to condense in a short review. Mr. Weyman's description of the scene, through many pages, is so clear that it might be the relation of one who actually saw the harassed clerks at their work, the anxious banker in his room behind, the tradesmen, flustered, timid, hectoring, apologetic, all scared at one thing—the possibility of losing their money and investments.

The whole scene is a triumph for Mr. Weyman. And with it all is closely woven one of the charming love stories of days when fathers were often tyrants and daughters trembled at the thought of speaking to a young man without correct introductions and mutual friends. The Squire, hard as iron, proud of his birth, scorning the idea of "trade," dependent—after an accident—upon others for his sight, yet with a very deeply-set tenderness for his girl, is drawn to the life. It was he who saved the bank, in spite of his contempt for the banker; it was his daughter whom the banker's son wooed and won, in spite of the plots of an enemy. He, as well as Ovington's, is chief in this story; and some of the interviews between these irreconcilables are wonderfully vivid.

* "Ovington's Bank." By Stanley J. Weyman. 7s. 6d. (John Murray.)

"Ovington's Bank" is a valuable book as well as an extraordinarily good novel, because it is a detailed picture of days that are nearly obliterated in our thoughts by the hurried operations of modern times, when our travelling is nearer the speed of a hundred miles an hour than fifteen. It represents Mr. Weyman's careful art at the highest level, we think, yet touched by him.

W. L. RANDELL.

SHEEP AND HORSES.*

When one looks for the conflict which shall be the heart of the drama in Mr. Gibson's dramatic narrative of four generations who are born and agonise and die in and about the lonely cottage of Krindlesyke on the bleak Northumbrian fells, one finds that there are two. First, there is the conflict between the fierce, material selfishness of blind Ezra Barrasford, whose brutality has driven five of his six sons from their hated home, and the long bitter patience of his wife Eliza. Ezra's spirit is tempered with Eliza's in their youngest son Jim, but he too at last goes out into the wilderness; and it is in Judith Ellershaw, who, though neither daughter nor wife of Krindlesyke, yet bears Krindlesyke a child, that the home-keeping patience of Eliza is once more fully manifest.

The second conflict, and in the development the most essential, makes its appearance with Bell Haggard. For Bell Haggard is a gipsy, with the scorn of her race for the folk who live in houses and sleep night after unadventurous night in the same bed. To her, whose life has been lived among horses, these keepers of sheep are as sheeplike as their silly charges. Be they wild or tame, Ezras or Elizas, the Barrasfords are all tame to Bell. Yet she, too, gives a child to Krindlesyke, being the mother of Peter's son, as is Judith of Jim's daughter; and for an hour, for fifteen years, Krindlesyke holds the daughter of the wandering race of Egypt captive between its white walls. Rather, it is the spirit of Eliza who holds her, for she it was who, coming in with Peter, the despised father of her boy, to steal old Ezra's hoard, found not Ezra's gold—for Jim had taken that—but Eliza dead upon her bed; and her bold gipsy heart was craven in the presence of the power of the dead.

> "I was the first to look on her dead face,
> The morn I came: if she'd but lived a day—
> Just one day longer, she'd have let me go.
> No living woman could have held me here:
> But she was dead; and so, I had to stay—
> A fly, caught in the web of a dead spider."

So she stays at Krindlesyke, "cook, slut, and butler" against her will, until her son Michael grows to manhood, finds and woos his cousin, Ruth Ellershaw, and brings her home, a lawful wife, to the cottage of his fathers. Then Bell binds her orange handkerchief about her head, kilts her petticoats, and takes to the road once more. In the end she returns—but it is not my business to re-tell Mr. Gibson's tale. Suffice it to say that, though in Michael and Ruth there is no trace of wildness, though they are pure Eliza, pure Judith, yet in their children, children still when the story closes, the renewal of the old conflict is foreshadowed.

NICHOLAS: Grannie, we saw the circus:
And Ralph still says he wants to be a herd,
Like dad: but I can't bide the silly baas.
When I'm a man I'll be a circus-rider,
And gallop, gallop! I'm clean daft on horses.
(An owl hoots piercingly without.)

RALPH: Grannie, what's that?

JUDITH: Only an owl, son.

NICHOLAS: Bo!
Fearent of hoolets!

RALPH: I thought it was a bo-lo.

NICHOLAS: Bo-los or horneys or wirrakows can't scare me:
And I like to hear the jinneyhoolets scritching:
It gives me such a queer, cold, creepy feeling.
I like to feel the shivers in my hair.
When I'm a man I'll ride the fells by moonlight,
Like the mosstroopers, when the owls are skirling.
They used to gallop on their galloways,
The reivers, dad says . . .

(The owl calls again, and is answered by its mate; and then they seem to be flying round and round Krindlesyke, hooting shrilly.)

RALPH: Oh, there it is again!
Grannie, I'm freckened . . .

JUDITH: It's an ellerish yelling:
I never heard . . .

RALPH: What's in the other room?
I want my dad and mammy.

JUDITH: You're overtired.
Come! I'll undress you, and tuck you into bed:
And you'll sleep sound, my lamb, as sound and snug
As a yeanling in a maud-neuk.

NICHOLAS: I'll ride! I'll ride!

In this childish dialogue Judith must have recognised an unwitting echo of a notable conversation between herself and Bell Haggard some six years earlier; in which Judith in her racy vernacular had very fully expounded the antithesis between sheep and horses, the fold and the open. It will serve, too, to show the vivid quality and closely-knit texture of a poem which for drama and characterisation against a background, hinted rather than described, of harsh but beautiful nature, Mr. Gibson has never yet excelled.

FRANCIS BICKLEY.

* "Krindlesyke." By Wilfrid Gibson. 6s. (Macmillan.)

Novel Notes.

THE GRAY CHARTERIS. By Robert Simpson. 7s. 6d. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

Mr. Simpson has taken the West African swamp as his province and with each journey his readers like it better. "The Gray Charteris" completes the trio begun by "The Bite of Benin" and "Swamp Breath." The characters of any one book are not repeated in another, but readers who have followed Mr. Simpson's work since his first success are becoming familiar with the atmosphere of his tales, know a Sobo when they meet him, can almost speak Jakri. The Benin tract is fascinating country (perhaps the more romantic because distant) with its humid nights and moth-haunted mangrove jungle, where the Britisher is either a trader or a Government official and the native chief is more than his match in cunning. For readers who are distrustful of a foreign setting in a story it may be said that Mr. Simpson's books are not Wild West tales, with swamps instead of prairies. His people are men and women who would interest us in any surroundings but who grow to their full stature in the atmosphere in which he places them. Charteris himself is a figure of romance. Mr. Simpson understands the value of a first impression and his introduction of his hero is masterly.

THE WIND BLOWETH. By Donn Byrne. 6s. (Sampson Low.)

Essentially this is the story of a man's quest for happiness. The man is a sailor of Antrim, his father a poet, his mother a Frenchwoman, himself a queer mixture, cosmopolitan, as it were, by birth and by years of world-travel in great sailing-ships of the mid-Victorian days. But the book is not a "story" in the ordinary sense of the word; it is a prose poem, a pilgrimage, an epic of wandering, of love sought in many ways, in many climes, with the beauty and the irresistible call of a corner of Ireland haunting it as the theme of a fugue. The author has a magic touch of his own, a strange power to bring music from words, and nowhere is this more appealing than in his quite wonderful descriptions of places and, we must add, of the women whose lives for a while intersected that of Shane, the sailor and poet and lover. The story has at times the beauty and colour of a vivid painting, and the scenes are so varied—Ireland, Marseilles, Beirut,

Buenos Ayres, with many intervals of seafaring—that full scope is given for the author's particular gift. We have read this book with full appreciation of its lack of coherence, its rapid changes, and have recognised the art behind it and felt more than a little thrilled by its uncanny power.

AND HAVE NOT LOVE. By Hamilton Fyfe. 7s. 6d. (Leonard Parsons.)

It is unfortunate that the pleasure of reading a cleverly written novel must be diminished when there is any hint of propaganda in it. Mr. Hamilton Fyfe, one feels, is " up against " several phases of life as it is lived in England, and shows this dissatisfaction too clearly. Many others of us also share his discontent ; there is reason enough for it ; but articles and essays (which Mr. Fyfe knows so well how to make cogent and powerful) are the natural form for its expression. Our chief regret is that the introduction of this strong propaganda element seriously lessens not only the artistic effect but the good effect of a fine story. The girl who goes to prison for six weeks rather than avoid the disgrace by bringing in the name of her dead girl friend ; the prison chaplain ; Henry Bell, who did all the good he could from a sense of duty and then wondered why people preferred his brother Dick, who never deliberately did a good deed but was loved by everybody—these are real people, brilliantly and truly depicted by masterly strokes, forming an essential group in a well-conceived scheme. Henry's household is a triumphant proof of Mr. Fyfe's gifts as novelist ; nothing could be better than the incessant clash of the totally different temperaments of the brothers. Yet we have an impression that Mr. Fyfe hurried over the closing chapter, so sudden is the change from good work to poor work in an ending which one is compelled to visualise as taking place on the stage—one of those delightful, sure " curtains " of the St. James's, for instance, in George Alexander's day, when every character stepped up and fitted in at exactly the correct moment—too correctly for real life. Fiction here is stranger than truth.

THE VERY DEVIL. By H. B. Young. 7s. 6d. (Page & Co.)

It is very difficult to hit on a new idea nowadays, but we think Mr. Young has succeeded—at least, the theme of his book is new, to us, in the matter of its handling. A respectable barrister accidentally materialises a sort of assistant Satan, who attaches himself to the barrister's person much as a genie was reported to do in the convenient days of the " Arabian Nights." But your genie was a gentleman, as a rule, and obtained the things his temporary master desired in a more or less legitimate manner. Abaddon, however, Mr. Hugh Lewis's attendant, had no such scruples. Murder, burglary, forgery, and other like amusements were to him matters of course, and the unhappy Mr. Lewis found himself continually plunged into awkward situations brought about by the devilish ingenuity of his associate. We would not venture to question Mr. Young's knowledge of the powers and predilections of the officials of the lower world, but we confess that we had not previously visualised a devil who used modern slang and was capable of getting what we can only adequately describe as " blotto " on mundane alcohol. However, it is all very amusing, and poor Lewis's experiences and the exploits of Abaddon make excellent reading. There is some very sound sense, moreover, sandwiched between the lighter portions. It is a pity that the mistakes either of the author or of the printer were not more carefully corrected before the work went to press.

JANE AND HERSELF. By Joyce Cobb. 7s. 6d. net. (Duckworth.)

Jane Milling, while still a young child, loses her mother, and her training, with that of her brother, is entrusted to Aunt Mildred, who has the " deplorable knack of making goodness unattractive." Jane is a sensitive, high-spirited, imaginative child, instinctively religious but with a refined

Photo by Maull & Fox. **Miss Joyce Cobb.**

and subtle spirituality which Aunt Mildred, who represents " the deadening mediocrity of Little Bethel," cannot understand. Jane's childish reactions to her repressive environment are vividly and convincingly described, as also is the character of the invalid, Christine Heather, whose robust but tender sympathy saves the situation and lays the foundations of an abiding friendship. Jane's subsequent development—her youthful infatuation for Dr. Leedham ; her heroic sacrifice of a scholarship for her brother's sake ; her experiences in a fever hospital, where she meets Percy Harmon ; her adventures into journalism ; her gradual awakening to the fact that Dr. Leedham's love cannot satisfy her deepest nature, and her final engagement to Harmon—is set forth with a sensitive but sure pen. It is an uneventful story, but Miss Cobb knows the romance of the commonplace, and her pages glow with delicate grace and understanding and humour. Jane is a thoroughly lovable character, and her creator is to be congratulated on a first novel of real distinction.

THE VEHEMENT FLAME. By Margaret Deland. 7s. 6d. net. (John Murray.)

When a laddie of nineteen flings himself into marriage (without even the formality of an engagement) with a woman twice his age—well, he is married to trouble as sure as the sparks fly upward. And equally certain is it that a writer basing a story on such a union of incompatibles as Maurice Curtis and Eleanor is daring the gods. Of course there was misunderstanding, and that right early, much earlier than even such untoward circumstances made inevitable. Eleanor was foolish quite apart from the folly of her consuming jealousy—and yet, with subtle skill, Margaret Deland keeps this silly, jealous woman so truly human that our interest is held to the end. Here is not jealousy on the grand scale : just the plain tale of the fear of youth felt by a woman who was very ordinary, very lonely and very human. The gloom of the story is relieved by the broad humanity and cheerful common sense of Maurice's foster-parents. Altogether the book is a remarkable achievement which is sure to win its way, and that on the recommendation of readers.

THE ENEMIES OF WOMEN. By Vicente Blasco Ibañez. 7s. 6d. net. (Fisher Unwin.)

Compared with the " Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse " this is a rather disappointing book. A certain Russian prince of fabulous wealth and fantastic adventures in the ways of life appropriate to his race, his rank, his riches, is at his glorious villa in Monte Carlo when the Bolshevik revolution finally strips him of all his properties. Having but a " pittance " left he proposes to a few friends, also in poverty, to join with him and live in his villa at his expense, and eschew the sight and company of women. Of course the plan breaks down—but with no definite plot or tale to be told. The beginning of the novel is tedious and not very captivating, nor are we much interested in any of the people of the story. After enduring them for a considerable space the reader differentiates one or two and does take a by no means absorbing interest in their doings and their fate, but it must be confessed that there is a sense of unreality or unimportance throughout. The love of the Prince for Alicia is certainly realistic—the love of a man who has had innumerable affairs, has bought his loves lavishly throughout his life, and finally has a violent

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caprice for one woman more, a caprice which he of course declares is real love at last. The most interesting thing in the book is the love of Alicia for her illegitimate son, never acknowledged, but her absorbing care and idol, whose death in a German prison camp is the crowning distress of her life. There are many clever, wise, cynical sayings, and a strange plane of life and mind is presented to us with a certain vividness, but the book is not an attractive one. And the translation is decidedly American.

CARNISS AND COMPANY. By Henry St. John Cooper. (Sampson Low.)

There is a particularly poisonous villain in Mr. St. John Cooper's new novel who, posing as an anonymous benefactor, sets a girl up in business in order to encompass her financial ruin and get her into his power. Beryl Carr longs to become an antique dealer, and an anonymous gift of twelve hundred pounds sends her off to Bond Street in search of likely premises. Finding, however, that twelve hundred pounds will not carry one very far in the West End, she jumps at the offer of partnership held out to her by Barry Furniss, a gay, facetious young man, possessing a thousand pounds and a fiancée selected for him by his fond father. Barry's qualifications for the post are best given in his own words: "Of amiable disposition, capable of minding the shop and of attending to customers; can sweep and polish; clean and sober in habits; unmarried at the moment, but at present walking out with a young lady with a view to matrimony. An answer will oblige." The two partners have a thrilling time circumventing the aforementioned poisonous villain and distinguishing "fakes" from "genuines" both in art and love, and the result is a thoroughly readable and engaging story.

THE CORNISH PENNY. By Coulson T. Cade. 7s. 6d. (Grant Richards.)

An exotic and semi-tropical corner of Cornwall, and an exotic and quite incredible corner of Chelsea, are the scenes in which this leisurely and strangely fascinating story is set. The strangeness is not easy to explain. Robin, the principal character, is sufficiently well drawn to stand alone, without the introduction of mystery in the matter of his parentage; and some of the other people of the book—notably the queer Aunt Cynthia and her opponent, Godfrey Myall—are equally convincing. But Dion, the film-picture voluptuary who lives in a secluded and luxurious Chelsea house surrounded by all the appurtenances of the Orient, and who turns out to be an evil-doer beneath his brilliant and plausible veneer, is out of place in a romance of this kind. Therefore the latter half of the novel is unsatisfying, critically considered, though we do not think this will make any difference to its appeal with the public for which it is intended. If only for the vivid impressions of Cornwall at its best, the book is worth reading; but we must warn those who do not know the "Delectable Duchy" that there are other aspects of the county. For example, it can rain there sometimes; and not all of its inhabitants are engaged in cultivating beautiful gardens and beautiful sentiments!

PUPPETS OF FATE. By Selwyn Jepson. 7s. 6d. (Hutchinson.)

The title is not altogether a happy one, for the force which drives Paul Harper and Joyce Churchill on a series of wild adventures is less fate than the definite will of their best friend who hopes, by putting them into unusual situations, to bring out forces which he believes to be latent in Paul's character. Paul is a dreamer and Joyce is a girl of action and keen business instinct, and when Paul proposes she tells him that he is not the man whom she can love, but she wishes he were. An attempt to steal an important patent from Joseph Harper, Paul's father, who is a steel magnate, sets the ball of adventure rolling, for both Paul and Joyce are keenly interested in Joseph's schemes. Thenceforward events somewhat resemble the energetic film performances in which one always flies and others pursue, and we get a medley of motor-cars and ships, of pistols and fisticuffs, of assaults and rescues. The reader is called upon to tremble for Paul's life several times, and on reaching the end of the story many will doubt whether one man could have survived all the battering which fell to the hero's share. We are sure that Mr. Selwyn Jepson enjoyed writing this story, and that readers, especially if they are young, will enjoy reading it.

Mr. Sidney Hastings Webb, whose successful humorous novel, "Deedles" (Sampson Low) was reviewed n last month's BOOKMAN.

The Bookman's Table.

FRENCH ESSAYS AND PROFILES. By Stuart Henry. 7s. 6d. net. (Dent.)

Most of the papers in this volume are of transatlantic origin. They are all the more interesting for that. The American view of France is likely to be—at least in some respects—keener than the English. Mr. Stuart Henry's interest is certainly keen, and it is expressed in a series of papers covering very wide ground. He leads off with a full-length study of Leconte de Lisle, and follows with an excellent account of the Nodier *salon*, the source and spring of much that gave the Romanticism of the thirties its peculiar character. The third paper breaks new ground, and discusses the great era of the French ballet, beginning with Taglioni who, with Elssler, Grisi and Cerrito, danced in the forties a *pas de quatre* that some of us can recall as the theme of ecstasy on the part of some very elderly gentlemen who appeared old enough to know better. Indeed, to persons young in the nineties, and familiar with what were called "ballets" at the Alhambra and Empire and Covent Garden, it seemed easily possible to overpraise that kind of entertainment; but then came the Russians—Pavlova, Karsavina and the matchless Nijinsky—and we learned to be tolerant of the old boys who had raved about the *pas de quatre*. Some of us will rave about "The Spectre of the Rose." Mr. Stuart Henry's paper contains just enough description of technique to add to our interest in his essay and in the art it praises. The latter half of the volume contains a set of shorter sketches—"kit-cats from life" we might call them, for Mr. Stuart Henry knew many of his subjects personally. Here for instance are the two Dumas—the father, a great big rollicking spendthrift; the son, a careful, clever, witty Parisian. Here too are Loti, with his well-invested capital of exotics, and Gyp with her superfine stock of Parisian frivolities. Sardou, Mistral, Lemaître and others contribute their peculiar features and help to make up a volume of real interest. The matter is slight—there is nothing decisive or authoritative anywhere, but it is very pleasant reading. French people, French art and French views of life are always worth discussing; and Mr. Stuart Henry discusses them with a sense of their special flavour.

From "BRITISH SPORTING ARTISTS."
By W. SHAW SPARROW
(John Lane).

THE WELSHMAN AND HIS SONS WITH ECLIPSE
(George Stubbs).

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From "CHELSEA PORCELAIN."
By WILLIAM KING
(Benn Brothers).

CERES
(From Lord and Lady Fisher's Collection).

From "CHELSEA PORCELAIN."
By WILLIAM KING
(Benn Brothers).

MADONNA AND CHILD
(Private Collection).

XUM

From "BRITISH SPORTING ARTISTS."
By W. SHAW SPARROW
(John Lane).

FOX-HUNTING EPISODE
(George Morland).

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BROKEN SHADE. By John Helston. 5s. (Chapman & Hall.)

Although Mr. Helston has

" Dreamed of the great dawns that woke
The marble from the mine
Into the white Greek women;
Of groves—among the pine
And ilex dark, the sea-fogs cloak,
That drip Ægean brine "—

the land which he knows most intimately lies far north of the isles of Greece. His spiritual and, one fancies, his natal home is where the Cumbrian fells look over Solway and the Roman wall, a country of bleak and misty uplands, of lonely valleys and moorland streams like that " wild Croglan water " which is :

" Bonny from the peat and brown
As the light on the barking otter
In warm brackens lower down."

He knows and sings this country in all its moods, and the wayward music, the " broken shade " of his verse is an apt mirror of its changing beauties and eternal majesties. He peoples it, too, with the authentic folk of the fells and dales, and turns the flashlight of imagination on to their hard and simple lives. He is not at his best, however, in narrative, for though his sense of the dramatic is strong, in the sustained development of a theme he grows wilfully tortuous and elliptical. It is in the instantaneous revelation of essentials that he comes nearest to excellence. His gift, that is to say, is lyrical; and he has, very intensely, that feeling of the mystical unity of man and the earth without which nature poetry is but topography in masquerade. Nor is that the only unity of which he is aware. The indissoluble bond of past and present is his recurrent preoccupation, and the ultimate oneness of the different modes of our apprehension finds beautiful and explicit expression in the poem specifically called " A Unity." The spirit wells in Mr. Helston's poetry, crystal-clear yet with a tang and a tincture of the peat, like the springs of his own north country.

THE DISADVANTAGES OF BEING A WOMAN. By Grace Ellison. 2s. 6d. net. (Philpot.)

One is inclined to think that Miss Ellison's book, though ably written, has been written too soon—but possibly if the writing of it had been deferred it might never have been written at all. The author anticipates, rather than chronicles, the results of the advance of woman into public life; she has not given human nature time to adapt itself to the new order of things. What have women done in the House of Commons she wants to know; though it is difficult to imagine the transformation she expects two women to bring about in something under four years. Enough that the embargo upon women has been broken down; evolution must be allowed to run its course, and the only effect such a treatise as this is likely to have is to spur women forward in the fight for liberty—that old fight of to-morrow against to-day, with to-morrow always on the winning side. What use for Mrs. Ellison to say women may not enter into competition with man? If the contest is as unequal as she affirms there will be no competition and the feminine antagonist will sink to her old levels; but no amount of argument will persuade woman that she may not compete—nothing but defeat and the inability to achieve; the proof must be left to time. Most thinking women, and many thinking men, will resent the tone of this discourse, and, while agreeing in certain particulars, will disagree with the main trend of it. They will nevertheless admit that much thought and experience are behind the writing of it, and for this reason it deserves earnest consideration.

THE KING. By Karl Rosner. 7s. 6d. (Methuen.)

The author of this remarkable psychological study of the ex-German Emperor takes for his text or rather *leitmotiv* the example of Hamlet, although perhaps there was really more of Macbeth in the character of the Imperial War Lord than that of the melancholy Dane. We see a strange, vacillating war-like figure, at one moment flushed with victory and then the inevitable result—spectral fears, doubts and misgivings. William is not by any means the strong figure he was continually represented to his people, but the pathetic puppet of a colossal play. We see him here in his stark reality during the decisive days of the summer of 1918, still frantically clinging to a purblind faith in his " divine authority," a gambler watching the last throw of the dice. Slowly he begins to realise his real position, and the picture Rosner draws of the War Lord's final despair and disillusion is a poignant one. As Viscount Haldane makes clear in his introduction the ex-Kaiser was not merely " bluffed " by the war chiefs who led him and Germany on to disaster, he, like the Czar of Russia, was literally choked by the Byzantine atmosphere that clung to him and his throne. Miss Blake's translation is an excellent piece of work.

SOCIETY SENSATIONS. By Charles Kingston. 12s. 6d. net. (Stanley Paul.)

Mr. Charles Kingston's books are easily compiled. Having decided on what *causes célebrès* he will disinter and re-exhibit, it only remains to consult the contemporary newspaper reports, and possibly some books of memoirs, and make a précis of the whole. That is not to say his books are dull and needless. The frailties of humanity are of unfailing interest—otherwise the writers of memoirs and published diaries would have but a poor market—and the annals of scandal generally present a moral to adorn the tale. In his latest book Mr. Kingston relates some famous cases of the nineteenth century. The most remarkable is the Mordaunt divorce case, which caused an amazing sensation in 1870, owing to the fact that the Prince of Wales (the late King Edward VII) was involved in it, and appeared in court to deny that he had committed adultery with Lady Mordaunt—a beautiful girl in the early twenties, and one of the eight daughters of Sir Thomas Moncrieffe. Lady Mordaunt had made a confession of guilt with several men in addition to the Prince of Wales, and it was eventually decided that she was insane. Even more tragic perhaps was the case of Sir Charles Dilke, which involved the ruin of the most able member of the Liberal Party. Here, again, the man was involved by the confession of the alleged erring wife, Mrs. Crawford. The divorce case of Lord and Lady Colin Campbell involves the mention of many notable people. Mr. Kingston is mainly concerned with matrimonial troubles, and his sixteen cases include those of Edwin Forrest, the actor; Lord William Lennox and Mary Paton, the actress; Lord Waterford and Mrs. Vivian; Lord Euston; and Lord Elgin, of " Marbles " fame. A cynic would describe this book as a warning against marriage and women in general.

A FAMILY OF DECENT FOLK. By M. Mansfield. 15s. (Fisher Unwin.)

The family in question is that of the Lanfredini of Florence. The first records of their doings seem to start with the twelfth century, and in 1225 they were established in Borgo San Jacopo. A tradition gave them Roman origin and the Orsini as their parent stock. In the fourteenth century they began to be prominent in the life of Florence, one of them being elected Prior in 1309, and his brother appears as a partner in the great banking firm of Bardi, the Papal treasurers. The present historian thinks that the family moved about this time to the Via Santo Spirito, and that there is still a trace of the fourteenth century building in the Lanfredini Palace of to-day. This palace was really the starting point of the present volume. It has been overlooked in all that has been written about Florence, especially as it was recently an hotel—the Palace Hotel Lung' Arno Guiccrardini—then a military hospital, then left vacant. Beautiful mural decorations passed unnoticed until chance brought them to the eye of the author who believed them to be the work of Pollaiuolo. Research put into his hands a complete dossier of Lanfredini data from the earliest times to their extinction in 1741. From these were drawn the present records which show the family's history interwoven with all the wonderful pageant of the life of Florence throughout the great centuries.

Music.

CHRISTMAS AND THE GREAT COMPOSERS.

By A. Eaglefield Hull.

IF spring be the poet's season, summer is certainly the composer's most fruitful time. It is true that we have in music, Spring Songs in plenty—"Frühlingsmorgen," "Au printemps," "Frühlingsrauschen," "Im Frühling," "Frühlingstrost," and so on; but altogether they are but a drop in the ocean of music which—tragic or comic, pensive or ecstatic, consoling or exciting—nearly all owes its conception to summer-time. The great symphonies of Brahms, Beethoven, Elgar, Tschaikovsky, to mention four composers only, were all born in summer, and indeed, when composers cannot find summer enough in their own country, they fly southward, as did Wagner to Italy and Saint-Saëns to Africa, to prolong their productive period.

Handel,
from a picture in the possession of His Majesty at Windsor.

It might not then appear that there is much for us to consider under our seasonable title; but, without any special research, there is quite enough music on the subject of Christmas to supply a dozen articles instead of one.

Christmas is a homely as well as a universal subject, and there are certain composers who may be called home-lovers rather than nature-lovers. It is to them we must chiefly look for our Christmas material. Bach was a home-lover; Beethoven a nature lover; Handel both. No greater lover of good cheer is to be found in the whole history of music than Handel. Did he not order dinner for six persons, and then tell the tardy servant that he himself was "de company"! But this is to put the pagan view of Christmas first.

One of our very greatest English composers was Henry Purcell, who was born fifty years before Handel came to England. Purcell died a young man of thirty-seven, and we have only his famous choral ode—"A Yorkshire Feast Song"—to bear witness to his fine capability of dealing with Yuletide joy. Besides, one must either love children or have the ability to become as a child, for the Christmas bells to call forth the music from within. How impossible this is to some people is evidenced by Edgar Allan Poe's heartless dictum—"children are never too tender to be whipped; like tough beef steaks, the more we whip them the more tender they become." Rather must the composer approach the Christmas theme through the channel of Schumann's beloved poet, Jean Paul Richter, who held that the smallest children are nearest God, as the smallest planets are nearest the sun.

Handel had this childlike mind, or he could never have written the Christmas music to the "Messiah." The eleven numbers (eight to eighteen) dealing with the Nativity are the very best of the oratorio; for they demand natural, unsophisticated singing, and will not stand that hollow-sounding overload of emotion so frequently attempted by singers later on in the work. The effective plan of introducing the chorus "O thou that tellest good tidings" by an alto solo, Handel derived from his English predecessor, Purcell. Indeed, his was a kind of elongation of Purcell's art. The figure in "Behold darkness" is a frequent device for pathos with the Italian primitives. What are we to say about "The people that walked in darkness"? If there be one grudge harboured against the tender Mozart, it is that half a century later he should have piled a load of diminished sevenths on to this expressive air, a load which not all the abuse of people of taste will now induce conductors to remove. In the long chain of climaxes which is the chorus "For unto us a child is born," Handel reigns supreme in choral work.

The purely instrumental "Pastoral Symphony" is nearly always spoilt by reading the word *Larghetto* too literally. Christmas weather in Palestine is summer, and so Handel picked up a folk-tune from a Calabrian shepherd's piping, and set it down here. The music should gently rock like a Sicilian boat-song, nothing more. Of the Brahmsian *innerer Klang* which people strive so unsuccessfully to put into it, Handel knew nothing. For this reason, the treble recitative and air, "There were shepherds," comes best from a boy's voice. The bowed figures in No. 16 are rarely

sufficiently clipped; they were well-known symbols for angels' wings in the Italian primitive music, which arose from the miracle and mystery plays. All the magical wonder of the chorus "Glory to God" is lost by the non-observance of Handel's direction—*Lontana* (in the distance), an infinitely finer idea than the usual outburst on the first note. I never heard my ideal rendering of the Nativity Music from the "Messiah" till last Christmas. Then I witnessed a modern morality play in a small Hertfordshire town, and the Christmas numbers from Handel's "Messiah" were performed behind the stage by a small band and chorus. Never before had the music conveyed so much of its unearthly beauty to me.*

* "The Coming of the Child." By G. C. Holland. (Mardon Bros., Bishop's Stortford.)

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How many people know that Bach wrote a "Christmas Oratorio"? It contains some of his very finest music and some of his very poorest. It is a cyclic work in six separate parts, intended solely for church use. It consists of airs, recitatives and choruses, interspersed with chorales for the congregation, and sacred madrigals for a select choir. When Bach was seeking the appointment of Church Composer to the Court of King Augustus of Saxony, he sought to ingratiate himself with his royal patrons by writing some secular cantatas. One was "The Choice of Hercules," another a "Musical Drama" in honour of the queen. The "Choice of Hercules" was composed for the birthday of an electoral prince; the "Dramma per Musica" in honour of the birthday of the Queen of Saxony (December 8th, 1733). The inspiration of Bach must at all times have flowed quickly and freely, and he must have thought the splendid things which went into these *pièces d'occasion* far too good to lose. So the finest numbers reappeared in the "Christmas Oratorio." The most notable transference is the exquisite slumber-song, "Schlafe, mein Liebster." A thing so tender, Bach must have dreamed over the cot of one of his own children; for it is a peasant's cradle-song. Transferred to the "Christmas Oratorio," it becomes the song crooned by the Virgin over the Holy Child in the manger-bed, and as such it has become widely known as one of the loveliest of all cradle-songs.

Bach's "Christmas Oratorio" supplies several of those many puzzling cases of borrowing and transferring of pieces, so common in the works of Handel, Bach and Beethoven; cases so intriguing to the self-esteem of those critics who are conscientious enough to build up for themselves a theory of musical æsthetics. Rather than readjust their theory, they prefer to shrug their shoulders at what they consider Bach's and Handel's regrettable deflections from the path of rectitude and conscientiousness. It never seems to strike them that any other way is possible. A theory which pleases me mightily is that all the music which has ever been composed was already existent in the air, and that all the music that will be composed is already there also. A composer arrives with the senses tuned to hear some of this cosmic music, and he puts it down in notes. Another may have heard it also, or he may have heard it in connection with some other subject apparently entirely unrelated. He cannot help it. Down it goes on his paper, a little more of the elusive beauty of the universe captured, registered and preserved for the sons of men.

And so it happens that Bach's "Pastoral Symphony of the Shepherds" is as little understood as Handel's. The motives of strings and flutes are those invariably used to represent angels' wings, and if we slightly emphasise the contrast between these and the group of four oboes having a theme of their own, we at once perceive Bach's idea of the shepherds—angels' music descending and making descant with that of the shepherds. Truly Bach's sublime music has yet to come into its own kingdom.

We must pass on to Mendelssohn, who has, however, treated us rather poorly as regards Christmas music. When staying in London with his friends, the Benickes, at Denmark Hill, in June, 1842, he wrote two little pieces for the piano, to which he added four others later on, sending them to the Benickes as a Christmas present. They hence acquired the title in England of "Christmas Pieces," but are not particularly distinctive and are somewhat uneven in character. Far different are the "Christmas Pieces" of Niels Gade, the Norwegian composer. They have fine musical material and are well suited to the fingers of juvenile pianists.

One has to look far into Brahms's music to find anything to our present purpose; but in the "Volkskinderlieder," arranged for the children of Robert and Clara Schumann, we find such delightful songlets as "The Little Sandman" and the quaint "Hunting Song" in which the Angel of the Annunciation is represented as blowing his horn. Nor is Schumann much more musically responsive to the call of Christmas bells. Yet the "Carnaval" (*Op.* 9), with its seventeenth century "Grandfather's Dance" (a much favoured end-of-the-party children's tune), is full of Yuletide spirit. So too are the numbers marked "Mit Humor" in the "Davidbündlertänze" (*Op.* 6). How charming too are the "Cradle Song" and the "Slumber Song" from the "Album Leaves" for piano (*Op.* 124)! It is not generally known that Berlioz's only attempt at an oratorio was "L'Enfance du Christ." Very little is known about it, except that between the years 1840–1844 he wrote three parts of it—"The Song of Herod," "The Flight into Egypt" and "The Arrival at Sais."

Far better Christmas music is to be found in the "Christmas Songs" by Peter Cornelius. He was the friend of Wagner and, like him, believed in writing his own words for his music. These six songs are published by Schott, with an English translation. The first three are the best, the third having an old carol played organ-wise, whilst the voice is free.

Liszt's oratorio "Christus" is only known by the instrumental "Pastorale," the "Procession of the Eastern Kings," and a Papal chorus, "Tu es Petrus," occasionally played on the organ. It was written when Liszt was living what he called a *vie trifurquée*, divided between Budapest, Weimar and Rome, with the Italian city as his head-quarters. The Hungarian government, in order to ensure Liszt's presence in their capital for part of the year, created for him the presidency of an institution which did not then exist, but afterwards became the Academy of Music. "Christus" was performed there in 1873, when the Magyars celebrated the master's jubilee with intensely patriotic demonstrations.

Sir Hubert Parry's "Ode on the Nativity," to fifteenth century words by William Dunbar, is a good specimen of English choral art. Dunbar was a preaching Friar who afterwards entered the service of James IV of Scotland. "He is at times as rich in fancy and colour as Spenser; as shrewd and coarse as Chaucer; as pious and devotional as Cowper; and as wildly grotesque in satire as Burns." The "Ode" of course is in the Cowperian vein. Parry has set it for soprano solo, chorus and orchestra, and Miss Dorothy Silk made a deep impression as soloist in it at the Leeds Festival in October.

By far the most ambitious Christmas piece of late years is the "Christmas Mystery" by Philip Wolfrum, of Heidelberg, published by Breitkopf in 1899 with

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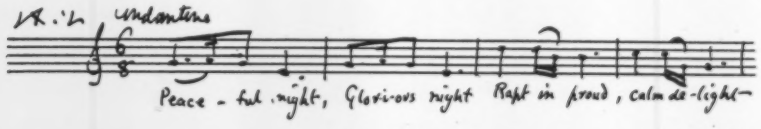
English words. This is an oratorio which can be played on a stage, the characters taking their own solo parts, and the chorus, grouped behind, carrying on the narration. The work is genuinely conceived in the folk-song spirit, but thoroughly "worked out" (*durchkomponirt*, the Germans call it) after the manner of an oratorio or an opera.

But for British people Wolfram's "Christmas Mystery" has been totally eclipsed by Rutland Boughton's choral drama, "Bethlehem" (published by Curwen & Sons). The libretto was adapted from the Coventry Nativity Play, and the work was first performed on December 28th, 1915, at Street, Somerset, during the Christmas Festival of the Glastonbury School. The composer has caught up the spirit of the old words in the right folk-song key, by making considerable use of the mediæval modes; never, however, in so remote a manner as to lose touch with modern audiences. The work is full of a strange yet simple beauty, and has something of that unexplainable thrill which the plays of Barrie always give us. War-time difficulties evidently stood in the way of productions of this work. It should now be performed more and more widely every year. It will be given at Bournemouth just before Christmas and also by the Streatham Philharmonic Society (with Miss Dorothy Silk in the part of the Virgin Mary) at Battersea on December 28th, 29th and 30th, and at Streatham on January 5th and 6th. I strongly advise all my readers not to miss any opportunity of becoming acquainted with the work. So far as I know, it will only be done in its cantata form. This of course will be a loss, but this half-loaf will be much better than no bread at all, when it is made of such good material.

And now as our hasty survey approaches more nearly to our own times, the supply of Christmas pieces becomes more numerous, but no better in quality, though smaller in scale. Grieg has a "Christmas Song" in his "Miniatures." The song "Bethlehem" of Gounod hardly needs mention. In France, the famous "Noël" of Adolphe Adam outstrips it in popularity. There is a lovely Tyrolese Christmas song, "Peaceful Night," set as a charming little piano piece by Max Reger, under the title of a "Christmas Dream" (Augener).



For pianists there are also the Reinecke pieces (*Op.* 46, 147) and the Tschaikovsky easy pieces for children (*Op.* 37, 39, 40), a "Christmas Album" by Zilcher and the lovely little "Litany of Jesus" by Gabriel Grovlez, which has also been arranged as a song.

Vaughan Williams has composed a "Fantasia on Christmas Carols" for baritone solo, chorus and orchestra (Stainer & Bell), and the "Antiphon" (No. 5) of his "Mystical Songs" (published by the same firm) with its joyous peals of bells, makes a magnificent Christmas piece for a singer with a medium range.

Gustav Holst's "Hymn of Jesus," performed at the Three Choirs Festival last year, is a kind of mystical Christmas work. It is set in the most modern musical idiom to words translated from the apocryphal Acts of St. John. This short cantata is remarkable for the boldness of its conception, its extraordinary harmonic effects and its striking application of five beats in a bar to secure a kind of mystical spirit-dance.

Among the modern British music there is an exquisite little movement, called "The Holy Boy" in John Ireland's "Four Preludes" for piano (Rogers), which has also been arranged as a song. Arnold Bax's lovely setting of a fifteenth century carol, "Of a Rose I sing a Song" (for a small but intelligent choir, with a harp, a cello and a double bass) is one of the most beautiful things in all music. He has also composed a setting, for unaccompanied double-choir, of a Balliol College MS. carol, beginning:

> "Fair maiden, who is this bairn,
> That thou carried in thine arm"—

with a delicious refrain, "Mater ora filium."

I shall be told, however, that some of these composers hardly come under the title of Great Composers, but let them but continue to wax stronger and grow in favour, and they will have amply proven their title before many more Christmas numbers of THE BOOKMAN have appeared.

ENGLISH SONGS FROM PARIS.

BY HERMAN KLEIN.

It must surely be a rare occurrence for a Paris firm of music publishers to bring out a group of English songs; rarer still, if not wholly unprecedented, when there are no fewer than twenty-six of them in the group, and not a single one is provided—or I should perhaps say burdened—with a French translation. At first glance it looked rather mysterious, this production *en gros* of a large collection of vocal pieces in separate sheet-music form, by a composer whose Anglo-Saxon name of Reginald C. Robbins is unfamiliar on this side of the Channel. The key to the mystery was not, however, far to seek. A little inquiry quickly enabled an interested reviewer to learn enough for his purpose. Mr. Reginald Robbins, it appears, is not an Englishman, but an American (a vocalist probably), who has resided for some time in Paris and who, whatever his gift for composition, can at least lay claim to a laudably fastidious taste in his choice of words for setting to music. Whether these songs represent a first attempt is not altogether clear. In some respects they seem to; in others they display a certain facility of handling that points to experience. In either case it may be regarded as a favourable omen when a Paris firm with the repute of Maurice Senart (20 Rue du Dragon) accepts responsibility for such a venture.

The whole of these twenty-six songs are written for bass or baritone, the voice part being printed—as indeed it always should be when so designed—in the bass clef. The first thing that strikes one on looking down the list of titles, enumerated on every copy, is the selection of the poets who have furnished the musician with his texts. In addition to the Bible (Psalms) we perceive the distinguished names (I quote them as they come) of Robert Bridges, Longfellow, R. L. Stevenson, Swinburne, Robert Browning, Matthew Arnold, Laurence Binyon, Keats and Coleridge; not to mention Margaret L. Woods, Alice Meynell, Helen M. Seymour, David Morton, W. H. Davies and Christopher Smart. Such a formidable array is calculated to arouse curiosity, if not anxiety, at the outset. It may be as much a source of danger as of strength and inspiration; for if the daring novice prove himself

insufficiently equipped to rise with fairly consistent success to the level of his theme, then is the non-success of his effort the more palpable and disastrous.

It will be remembered that Sixtus Beckmesser of Nuremberg thought his principal obstacle surmounted when he discovered (and appropriated) the newly-improvised poem of Walter von Stolzing, which he found lying upon Hans Sachs's table. His feeling in the matter of song-writing was that the poet's was by far the harder job of the two; that so long as he could secure the verbal material to work upon the rest was easy. His particular gift was not of the poetic order; but, when it came to setting lines of music, he possessed a nice little tune of his own which he thought he could fit to anything under the sun, with the requisite variety of rhythm and treatment for making it appear in the guise of a separate and distinct creation. In a word, he had hit upon a "formula," and with it, like the discoverer of a patent medicine or the old masters' method of mixing colours, he expected to win fame and fortune.

Mr. Reginald Robbins may not have followed absolutely in the footsteps of Beckmesser; but his plan, consciously or unconsciously, is similar. He is less rigid, less orthodox; he has greater resource. But unfortunately he paints all his poetry and verse with the same musical brush; he maintains his family likeness to the verge of monotony. His method or formula, apart from this, has some commendable features. It is agreeably free from complication or over-elaboration. He does not trouble about introductory preludes, but plunges forthwith *in medias res*. The stranger the metre, the more difficult the scansion of the line, the stronger the appeal of the verse seems to be. One can imagine Mr. Robbins declaiming his words, and then reproducing vocally the exact accent and stress of his declamation. He is not striving after a tune or a bit of broad melody, being innocent of aught so commonplace. He is endeavouring to follow the rhythm of the language in its pulsation rather than in its sense, and he accomplishes it by wandering vaguely up and down the scale, by repetitions of the same notes, or by intervals that intrigue but do not interest.

Take as an example No. 1, a setting of Robert Bridges' "A Passer By," The voice begins by declaiming:

"Whither, O splendid ship, thy white sails crowding,
Leaning across the bosom of the urgent West,"

uttered in triplets and repeated quavers down the scales of C minor and E minor; then threading its way up again, in and out, flirting with this key and that, meandering on for bar after bar, reaching no sort of climax, and scarce pausing for the singer to take breath until two-thirds of the poem has been completed. Meanwhile what of the accompaniment? It keeps up a rhythmical burden of its own, with a certain amount of harmonic colouring remotely suggesting the "atmosphere" of the poetry, supporting the voice, but not, it is to be feared, adding a very appreciable contribution to the beauty of the song as a whole. Each performs its solemn share of the allotted task; neither voice nor pianoforte, however, penetrates deeply enough to get to the heart of the story. The result is therefore unsatisfying.

This sample may be taken as more or less typical of the entire series. What Mr. Robbins's music mainly lacks is not cleverness but imagination—a quality for which no amount of technical skill (were it even there to praise) or of conscientious endeavour can possibly atone; least of all, perhaps, in the delicate, complex art of song-writing.

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By MAY BYRON.

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revolutionary become a somewhat outworn convention, and the art that we regarded as audaciously futurist become a commonplace of the present? All my days I have watched these things taking place before my eyes and ears—yet for the life of me I cannot define exactly how they happened. Music is termed "undated"; and some of the noblest music that we know, say the great Bach Mass, and the Ninth Symphony, convey no air of antiquity, being "not for an age, but for all time." But it is only the lesser stars which pale their brightness before the appearance of new and greater ones, and which unquestionably date themselves. The planets roll upon their way undimmed. . . .

Yet "'tis we musicians know" how horribly conservative we are, how jealous and tenacious of established reputations. Intolerance is the badge of all our tribe, and you will find it exemplified right back through the centuries: from the *cognoscenti* who looked askance at John Sebastian, to the Parisian critics who turned down "Faust" as being devoid of melody and destitute of merit. And I myself can remember how the heterodox name of Wagner might not be mentioned at the Royal Academy of Music, save with bated breath *sub rosa*.

The moral of all this is, that one should not only be tender towards the past, and discriminative in the present, but should "greet the future with a cheer."

The name of Chaminade suggests (though happily the gifted lady is still among us) a period now seeming really distant—the period of her early popularity, some twenty-five years ago, when "The Silver Ring" was in everybody's repertory. And the charm which exhales from these five songs of hers, is somewhat the charm of a faded flower, still sweet—of odours which, in Shelley's phrase, "live within the sense they quicken." "Madrigal" is a dainty, delicate little song, full of grace and melody. (The words are characteristic of the late Clifton Bingham: for they contain—as customary with him—an allusion to rain, which does not occur in the original French.) Much the same remarks apply to "Gems," delightfully pretty and tuneful: and to "I would believe," and to "My Heart Sings." The French gaiety and spontaneity of these compositions are very inspiriting: and Mme. Chaminade's fount of fluent melody, of singable quality, never fails her. "Berceuse" appeals to me less than these others; but this is only personal predilection. The volume would be a welcome gift to any light soprano: for although the contents are not of the most modern, they are none the less attractive for that.

Sir Landon Ronald's "Vignettes" may be considered as favourable specimens of present-day song-writing—good sound stuff, well in sympathy with the words—the work of an expert hand. "Ask me not, Dear," with its thoughtful setting of Laurence Binyon's lines—"O, Falmouth is a Fine Town," a robust rendering of Henley's popular verses—"When the Leaves are Fallen," simple and effective—all are easily within the reach of amateur vocalists and accompanists—each will afford pleasure to the hearers. But far and away the best of the "Vignettes" is No. 4, "The Rushes," where a lyric by Francis Ledwidge, "the Irish Burns," is treated with a blend of breadth and subtlety which result in a very fine song. The monotonous nodding of the rushes, gradually accelerated as they yield up their secret—the mysterious appearance of the "fairy girl out of Leinster"—the burst of passionate ecstasy in which the whole thing culminates—these traits reveal Sir Landon Ronald at his most admirable.

The compositions of Arnold Bax trend towards the ultra-modern; and although "A Lullaby" has moments of romantic beauty, its restless tonality is perturbing One imagines that the composer has told himself, "Hundreds and hundreds of lullabies have been written—each of them, as a rule, exponent of childlike simplicity and maternal sweetness. Mine shall not be a bit like any one of them." Hence, the maternal feeling is not conspicuous: the simplicity is absent: and the queer unfamiliar sweetness which certainly is in evidence, is bewildering to anybody who has ever loved a little child. I do not decry this cradle-song: but it is, in my opinion, remote from ordinary human experience.

Eugène Goossens' "Silence" confronts us with the undeniably ultra-modern, at the point where it verges on the futuristic: an art whose theory is apparently to create an impression at all costs. I believe, myself, that this art has illimitable possibilities; that, as yet awhile, we are hardly qualified to be recipient of it: that some day we shall look back from its heights upon our present-day and past-years music, as one might look back upon "Thank you, pretty Cow" and "Twinkle, twinkle, little Star," from Wordsworth's "Immortality" ode, or from the "Grecian Urn" of Keats. . . . But I don't believe most of us can either understand or properly appraise it from our immediate standpoint. At any rate "Silence" can scarcely be criticised apart from its orchestration, for it is obvious that a pianoforte-and-vocal score can do it scant justice, in a case where orchestral colour is of vital import. It is descriptive, yet it is not "programme music": it is immensely clever, yet it runs counter to all one's preconceived opinions. It undermines ancient prejudices, it opens out new vistas: and the old-fashioned person will agree with Sir George Henschel, "What a golden age for the young composer—no form, no rules, no nothing!"

"Lycidas," Matthew Arnold wrote, "is the touchstone of taste: the eighteenth century criticism could not make anything of it. The very form of the poem is a stumbling-block to the common-sense critic. . . . Indeed, so high is the poetic note here reached, that the common ear fails to catch it." We have in music no such "touchstone of taste," because music is an evolutionary art still in its infancy, and because our tastes, as I have already indicated, continually shift and vary from generation to generation. But it strikes one as just possible that, in times to come, "Silence" might be regarded as, on its own lines, some sort of similar touchstone.

WITH HIS LUTE.*

GEORGE SAMPSON.

Are we getting back towards Merrie England? There was once a time when common Englishmen appreciated good English poetry when they heard it, and enjoyed good English music when they heard it. Then elegant and superior persons, aided and abetted later on by certain Germans, robbed the common Englishman of his birthright, made poetry an affair of Garden Suburbs and music a preserve for the better classes. But times are changing. Shakespeare, whose word-music is a wonder of the world, is coming back as a spoken thing, and the Shakespearean composers, founders of keyboard music and masters of the madrigal, are rapidly being rediscovered.

For this latter gift we are indebted very deeply to Dr. Fellowes. Dr. R. R. Terry has been the apostle of English sacred song; Dr. Fellowes has been the apostle of English secular song. To his volumes of the English madrigalists he has now begun to add volumes of the English Lutenists—those who wrote music to delightful poems and made accompaniments thereto on the lute. The presentation of the text is perfect. First we get the original form of each song, the melody or cantus-part being given, with the lute-tablature and barring beneath it. To enable this to be read, Dr. Fellowes has transcribed quite literally the lute part into the terms of modern notation. Thus the original form of the song is given as completely and helpfully as possible. But we get more than that. Each song is presented as well in a modern version, with the accompaniment expanded for the piano and the bars placed in accordance with modern usage. Surely no editor of old music has ever been so copiously helpful as well as so scrupulously scholarly!

The two volumes we have received are Francis Pilkington's "First Book of Songs or Airs" (1605) and John

* "The English School of Lutenist Song Writers." Transcribed, Scored and Edited from the Original Editions by Edmund Horace Fellowes, M.A., Mus.Doc. Two Parts. 6s. net each. (Winthrop Rogers.)

Dowland's "Second Book of Airs" (1600). Each volume is produced with creditable care, and the series should attract not only the musician but the bookman. There is no poet whose references to music are so affectionate and "knowledgeable" as Shakespeare's; and surely no lover of Shakespeare would willingly turn away from songs that he must have known and might have sung! In themselves they are exquisite examples of the right words fitted to the right notes. They are lyric achievements of which Englishmen may justly be proud:

"If music and sweet poetry agree"—

Well, here they are in concord sweet enough to have satisfied Shakespeare himself.

The Drama.

THE UBIQUITOUS THEATRE.*

The glamour of Mr. Punch is not yet exhausted. This little play on him, by Russell Thorndike and Reginald Arkell, was produced by the Grand Guignol early in its career—not as a shocker, but as a sample of that grotesquery on which the theatre equally prided itself. Was there some thought of laughing over the late decline of earthly pomps and principalities? Punch is invested with the Order of the Big Stick: "They think I'm going to do the same as Mr. Scaramouch—lend it to a blind beggar, the silly fool." "You might do much worse with it," says the eternal wife-mother. "I'm going to. I'm going to do much worse with it. . . . Shan't copy Mr. Scaramouch. The Big Stick means nothing, eh? I'll show 'em! They've given me the power; I'm going to use it. I'll show 'em who's master. . . . Mayor! I'll be Emperor!" Or was the allegory nearer home? "It's my belief he doesn't like being laughed at," the Showman says. "He wants to frighten us and he can't. And the more they laugh, the more angry he gets——" Self-satire was heard more than once from the Grand Guignol stage. But Mr. Punch is older than all this, and it is better to accept the play as a restatement of that old simple allegory of the theatre, the Big Noise Frustrated—the ultimate triumph of human laughter over the Pistols and Bobadils of every country and age. Barrie sounded the same note fantastically in "Peter Pan": "They force the Baby to be Hook!" fumes his indignant pirate. And the exquisite tenderness of Richard Middleton saw Guy Fawkes so:

Mr. Reginald Arkell,
joint author with Mr. Russell Thorndike of "The Tragedy of Mr. Punch" (Duckworth).

"For I am but a tale of long ago—
The brief remembrance of a brave man's shame,
Which is become a little childish game
That babies' feet can dance in, all aglow.
And so I pass . . ."

This is the inner meaning of the Punch parable, the "something more than meets the eye" to which the Showman refers. The street-puppet man has somewhat crudified it; now this Grand Guignol play restores it to its ancient place.

Whether by coincidence or cunning design of the Editor, the same messenger brought me another play derived from the Pulcinella tradition—Goldoni's "Liar," produced at Mantua in 1750, now translated and illustrated by Grace and Claude Lovat Fraser, respectively. But "The Liar" follows the tradition at a pretty far distance. There are some ghosts of the *commedia dell' arte*—Arlecchino, Brighella, Pantalone, Il Dottore—but they are no longer the life and soul of the plot: unless indeed we see in the Liar himself Big-Stick's successor. Lelio inherits Big-Stick's ephemeral power, but not the Big-Stick method. Call him Big-Noise, if you will, a hero of intellectual rather than physical truculence, whose pride leads no less inevitably to the same kind of fall—Goldoni is nothing if not moralist. The old type has evolved into a clash of wits, no longer of cudgels. Molière is the dramatist with whom one makes instinctive comparison, and I had all but exhibited my ignorance by calling Goldoni an Italian Molière—but look where my abridgment comes! Mr. Gordon Craig, writing a preface in that late-Craigian style which never seems able to make up its mind between finikin delicacy and sledge-hammer aphorism, warns me that this is precisely what I must not do. For Goldoni, "much as he was devoted to the theatre, was never of it." A Venetian Pepys, one gathers: a respectable bourgeois little gentleman, with all the informed interest of the scholar-dilettante, none of the artist's fire. Mr. Craig's tiny preface gives you the man, clear and human. So I will leave it at this—that if you like Molière's scamps and charlatans, you will like Goldoni. He has the same easy wit, narrowing and deepening his characters into types rather than rounding them into individuals; he is more realistic in low life than high; and his plot twists and turns about on the flimsiest pretexts, because he is always more concerned to entertain than to convince. In the late illustrator of "The Beggar's Opera" he finds a happy interpreter, the scenic head-pieces being especially good. And the translation is above the average.

My third book takes me far enough afield from France, England and Italy. It is "The Chinese Theatre," a cosmopolitan volume written by Chu-Chia-Chien, translated by James A. Graham, prefaced and illustrated by Alexandre Jacovleff, and printed in Paris. If only they had bound it in American cloth or even morocco! But it is more gorgeous than that, a really magnificent book in a clear type on heavy paper. I had no thought of comparison-hunting when I took it up, yet on the third page of the preface I find comparison made between the Chinese theatre and—what but our old friend, the *commedia dell' arte*! Like that Italian form, the writer tells us, Chinese folk-drama deals almost exclusively with conventional characters. It is akin to "the antique theatre, the mystery plays, the *commedia dell' arte*, to all forms of theatrical art which are not the expression of individual personality but the reflection of a race." It has changed little from the fourteenth century, and from the seventeenth not at all. It has a highly complicated ritual, but the simplest morality—plain black-and-white without half-tones, right *versus* might, vice punished and virtue suitably rewarded; Adelphi melodrama could go no further. We are given several typical plots, their themes being patriotism or treachery, ingratitude, the sanctity of family life, or the struggles of poor students (generals and literary men seem to be favourite heroes). Actors, too, are bound by the same rigid tradition, which they dare not break; they act as Tybalt fenced, by the book of arithmetic, and a very intricate arithmetic, too. Author and artist show them at their craft—training from boyhood under an aged professor; miming through their parts to the beat of music; painting grotesque futuristic make-ups over their faces and scalps; donning beards in whose presence the puny vocabulary of beaverdom goes instantly bankrupt. It is all quaint and ludicrous and yet strangely provocative; one feels

* "The Tragedy of Mr. Punch." 3s. 6d. (Duckworth.)—"The Liar." 7s. 6d. (Selwyn & Blount.)—"The Chinese Theatre." 21s. (John Lane.)

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instinctively that this finished, delicate art is somewhere admirable, that it must have some quality of grace, force or dignity beyond what here appears—" more in it than meets the eye," as the Showman would say. This acting must have *style*, or it would long ago have perished. And the book's great fault is that it nowhere quite manages to reveal what that style is. Sometimes the illustrations almost give it; there are some ceremonial combats, some posturing characters, that are very suggestive. But the lack of motion cheats us, even here. The whole thing remains a Chinese puzzle—a complete mechanism, infinitely ingenious and fascinating, to which we have not the key. Maybe the film alone could reveal to us stay-at-home Westerners the Chinamen's secret.

GRAHAM SUTTON.

GALSWORTHY'S PLAYS.*

One kisses one's mother's housemaid, not one's own. By the time the natural healthy man is of an age to keep a separate establishment, he has either outgrown illicit flirtation or has progressed to a more nicely calculated lasciviousness. John Builder does neither. His is an artificial strength of character, and in " A Family Man " it is mercilessly dissected. The French maid, his wife admits to him, may prove too attractive—but not to the manservant. His own daughters have seen through him years ago: " Do you remember when you used to come into the nursery," Maud stabs at him, " because Jenny was pretty? You think we didn't notice that . . . and in the schoolroom—Miss Tipton." He has an eye for the little servant at Athene's studio. And in due course he falls an easy if unwilling victim to Camille: no more than a kiss, indeed, " all over in two minutes, and I doing my utmost." But " the fact that you had to do your utmost is quite enough," retorts his wife; and the same damning fact is the key to the whole play. It is the old Shaw and Ibsen story of the " strong " man who lives by respectability, not by righteousness. Builder has no righteousness, only a code: his code allows him tyranny in his own home; it allows fits of passionate anger, and the browbeating of wife and daughters; it draws the line at actual infidelity, but by half-hearted hole-and-corner flirtation its letter remains unbroken; and as it has no spirit to break, its strange honour is satisfied. Hear Mrs. Knox on the same kind of morality in " Fanny's First Play ": " If you have that (righteousness) in you, the spirit will set you free to do what you want and guide you to do right. But if you haven't got it, then you'd best be respectable and stick to the ways that are marked out for you; for you've nothing else to keep you straight." No more has Builder. When his machine-made respectability breaks down he will go to the devil—unless his wife saves him from that pilgrimage, returning Candida-like to meet his need. And yet the devil, one suspects, might have made a better man of John Builder than his wife is ever likely to do. He is a brand snatched untimely from quite promising coals, and one mistrusts his salvation. Singeing will hardly serve.

Mr. Galsworthy has a weakness for these pretty housemaids. Here is another one in " Windows," kissing the young son of the house this time, instead of the father. But young Johnny March has nothing in common with Builder. He is an idealist and, we are told, a poet, though his plentiful lack of humour makes his poetic future seem doubtful. He has " been through hell in the war " (from his Mess, no doubt), and his half-baked chivalry is caught on the rebound by the half-baked sociology of Faith Bly, a young housemaid who has just done two years for infanticide. If only Faith had been old Builder's daughter! A few early hidings, followed by reaction from the patriarchal regime, might then have made a woman of her as of Athene Builder. But no living creature could react from Bly, most pulpy of philosophers. He is the central character in the play—a window-cleaner, the futility of whose physical work is only equalled by that of his intellectual pretensions. 'Aigel, 'Aikel, and this Antichrist Neesha, what came in with the war, have given him mental indigestion; and it is quite evident (though Mr. Galsworthy strangely neglects to make this point) that the paternal oracle is at least as responsible for Faith's wrong-headedness as the prison experience to which she attributes it. The type is truly enough drawn; one met it in barracks, piquant at first until its novelty wore off, after that more devastatingly boring than the most brutal animalism the British army could show. Even Johnny gives him a wide berth: Johnny has been in the army! At the Court Theatre Mr. Thesiger was magnificent; one could have screamed with dismay at the sheer, moth-eaten, platitudinous boredom he achieved in the part. But for the fierce light of the stage such efforts are too subtle, and the part killed the play. Set a bore to catch a bore, and let a fellow-philosopher judge him: " Here is but dullness ratified " would not Holofernes say? " But for the elegancy, facility and golden cadence of dramatic poesy, *caret*! "

" Loyalties " completes the volume. I have already written of it here, and as time pressed I had not intended even to reread it. But in a rash moment I turned a page or two—and good-bye to intentions. . . . They say reviewers grow callous to all books. Not to this kind!

* " Plays." By John Galsworthy. Fifth Series. 7s. (Duckworth.)

THE SCANDAL. At the New Theatre.

Bad plays, as every actor knows, often inspire good acting. This play is bad enough, but of the wrong order of badness. There is abundance of good acting in it; Mr. Leslie Faber and Miss Rosina Filippi are both excellent—Mr. Faber throughout the evening, Miss Filippi in a part all too short. Of Miss Thorndike herself it is less easy to speak. She is very good indeed on the lines laid down by her part, that of a neurotic, harassed wife, fighting odds heroically on the verge of a nervous breakdown. No English actress beats her at this game; the question is whether the game is still worth her brilliant candle. At the Grand Guignol her variations of it were infinite; and if she now seem to be over-acting the old rôle, the Grand Guignol will no doubt be blamed. Unfairly, I think; true, a Grand Guignol season at Covent Garden might ruin any actress; in the small auditorium of the Little, however, crude themes could still be presented with artistic restraint. I should be more inclined to diagnose overwork as her present trouble. Overwork may have either of two evil effects on the artist. If it be overstudy, it leads to under-acting; the player is prepossessed with mere mnemonics and must needs leave the acting of a part to look after itself, with results patent to any student of repertory acting. Overwork in the sense of too many performances of well-studied parts has just the opposite effect; tired physically and artificially strung up, the artist slips into the easier way which is to broaden and crudify effects towards melodrama; that is to play everywhere for safety by a parade of emotions, and for simplicity by standardising the emotions themselves from part to part. Just now Miss Thorndike, I feel sure, is overworking herself in this second way. I saw " The Scandal," not on its first night, but after " Medea " had started and " The Cenci " had gone into rehearsal; and there were times, especially in the opening scenes, when Charlotte Fériol was usurped by the Colchian princess of the preceding *matinée*, as the disturbing ghost of an old friendship is said to have haunted Brutus on Philippi field. Miss Thorndike's history is one of untiring work—a much grimmer apprenticeship than is suspected by most of her admirers. May I, as one of the most ardent, implore her not now to overdo it, nor imperil the triumph which she has brought so deservedly within her grasp? As I write, Miss Thorndike's future arrangements are still unsettled. Mr. Lang returns to the New Theatre at Christmas, but it is hoped to continue the present season elsewhere. Lady Macbeth we have long anticipated. Has no one whispered Cleopatra?

G. S.

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